

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

School of History

SOME ASPECTS OF BRITISH INTEREST IN EGYPT IN THE LATE  
18th CENTURY - (1775-1798)

Thesis submitted for the Ph.D. Degree

BY

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Add.Mss.	..	Additional manuscripts
B.M.	..	British Museum
C.O.	..	Colonial Office
C.S.P.	..	Calendar of Domestic Papers
E.I.C.	..	East India Company
F.O.	..	Foreign Office
F.R.	..	Factory Records.
H.M.	..	Home Miscellaneous
I.O.	..	India Office
M.R.	..	Marine Records
Mel.Mss.	..	Melville manuscripts
W.O.	..	War Office

Cambridge, April 1910.

PREFACE.

The account of British interest in Egypt in the late 18th century does not claim to be exhaustive. On such a subject, covering a vast tract of years and touching so many aspects, it would be possible to go on amassing relevant material almost indefinitely. It would, indeed, have been easy, even with the material actually collected, to have made this work much longer, but a firm belief in brevity encouraged me to jettison ruthlessly. My aim throughout has been merely to suggest the many-sided importance and interrelation of British interest in Egypt during that specific period.

To attempt this involves the danger of falling between three stools, for the triple character of this interest necessarily leads me into cultural, commercial and diplomatic fields of history, and exposes me to the charge of inadequacy and irrelevance from specialists in either sphere. Whether I have succeeded or not in preserving a fair balance between these three aspects, and in preserving an adequate study of all 'in the round', I am of course unable to judge. I can only plead that I have made the effort.

Birmingham, April 1950.



INTRODUCTION.

In the study of Islamic Society, the 17th and the 18th centuries have not yet been given adequate attention. Scholars keenly researching on the growth of Islamic nations, up to the 14th or 15th centuries, tend to jump to the 19th and 20th centuries to trace the most important factor in the life of Islamic Society during these two centuries: namely the Western impact on the economic, cultural and social life of that Society. The general view, therefore, is that Islamic Society in the 18th century was static. Although one has to admit that the Turks stood as a barrier between Western thought and the Islamic world of the Near East, the view which considers Islamic Society in the 17th and 18th centuries as static, is essentially a Western one. In the first place no living society could be static. In the second place, Islamic Society developed from within. Islamic thought and theology brought in Najd one of the most important movements in the history of Islam; ~~the~~ Wahabism, with its great influence over Mahdism in Sudan or Soonocism in North Africa.

Another aspect of the life of this society in the 18th century is the approaches of the Western Powers to the Arab world on which the bases of the future relations between these Powers and the Arab world were founded. This thesis attempts to deal with the approaches of the first great European Power at the end of the 18th century, Britain, and the first Arab country in the Near East, Egypt.

Islamic Society in the 18th century, took on its characteristics both externally and internally, through events which took place in the 16th century. The century saw the greatest outbreak of the Islamic world through the religious revolution of Ismail El Safawy, as a consequence of which the Ottoman state, which hitherto had been part of the Persian world, was enabled to conquer the Arab world. The second major event of the century was the Western geographical discoveries which resulted in the change of the trading routes between East and West through Egypt to the sea route round the Cape. The geographical discoveries went hand in hand with the growth of Western influence in the East. But until the turn of the 18th century, Europeans did not establish their influence in Islamic lands except India and the East Indies, and touched slightly the different 'Sultanats' or 'Imarats' on the all-sea route. Rapidly, however, they began to spread their influence during the 17th and 18th centuries, around the Ottoman world, until by the end of the 18th century they had tightly surrounded it. Within these three centuries (the 16th, 17th and 18th) the bases of future relations between the West and the Islamic world in the Near East were shaped. Islamic society ceased to function as a contributor in the World economic and cultural movements and became a spot for Western exploitation and imperialism. The Ottoman Empire could not stop that change. Neither did she apparently succeed in westernizing her constitutions to enable her to



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take an active part in the new world developments. The Ottoman Sultans were adamant about revolutionizing their Empire. It is equally true, however, that the Ottoman conquests - in spite of their greatness and in spite of the fact that they possessed the keys of the shortest routes between the East and the West - came too late to stop the major commercial revolution. The Ottomans landed in Morocco between 1512 and 1519. Had they been earlier, they might have backed the remaining Islamic forces in Spain and thus prevented Ferdinand and Isabella from concentrating their efforts on the Spanish Imperial movement. It could be argued too that their conquests of Egypt (1517) and of Iraq (1534) were too late to surpass the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. The Ottomans, moreover, did not only refuse to make use of their possessions of the shortest routes between the East and the West, but also stood against any Western attempt in this direction. Obviously they aimed at a self-sufficient policy within the Ottoman world and weakening its relations with the rest of the World. With nations exhausted both materially and morally (an exhaustion which came as a result of the fall of the Abbasside Caliphate and the Byzantine Empire), the Ottoman task was not exceedingly difficult. Complacent with their skill in administration and war, the Ottoman Sultans feared any change in the Empire and therefore opposed any new political, social or economic ideas. Thus they lost the chance of possessing countries whose geographical position was unparalleled and

whose civilisations were unsurpassed.

The Western Powers were encircling the Empire gradually. Great Britain, a developed Power in its commercial and colonizing activities in the East, approached the Turkish Empire at three points. The early approach came through the Levant, at the time of the establishment of the Levant Company in the 16th century. The Levantine impact on English life and thought during the Elizabethan period has been fully studied by Chew<sup>(1)</sup>. Alfred Wood tells the story of the Levant Company<sup>(2)</sup> - in the main a story of failure both as a link between England and the Ottoman world and as a commercial company. The second and third approaches were the Persian and the Red Sea Gulfs, both came through the East India Company. In the 17th century this Company was able to open trade with the coasts of the Persian Gulf and South West of Arabia, both known in the 17th and 18th centuries as the 'Gulf-trade'. A. Wilson<sup>(3)</sup> vividly tells the story of the British contact with the Persian Gulf. The British approach to the Red Sea came sometime later. Up to the end of the 17th century the British were able to establish some commercial relations with Mocha. But since the Ottoman sovereignty in these places, navigation in the Red Sea was strictly prohibited to the 'Franks'. At the beginning of the 18th century, the Sheriff of Judda found it profitable to break that rule and let

1. S.C.Chew, The Crescent and the Rose, New York 1937.

2. History of the Levant Company, Oxford 1935.

3. The Persian Gulf, London Oxford 1928.



'Frank' ships sail up to Judda, beyond which navigation was again prohibited. The story of the attempt to proceed from Judda to Suez lies within the scope of our work, attempts which took place in the second half of the 18th century and brought Egypt directly within the sphere of British interest.

Politically, the period between 1775 and 1798 forms a link between the utter failure of the Levant Company to foster relations between Egypt and England and the Napoleonic upheaval at the turn of the 18th and in the early 19th centuries. In this period the basis of the 19th century British policy towards Egypt were realized but remained within the narrow limits of the British 'India interest' until the French Expedition brought them vividly before the English public. Before this major event, the British public was neither interested nor had accurate information about the political British interest in Egypt. For example, the Annual Register referred to George Baldwin in 1798 as 'our consul residing at Alexandria'.<sup>(4)</sup> Baldwin was not in fact a consul at that time, and his residence was in Cairo. Only when the crisis of Oczakov 1791 developed and attempts were made to reassess the whole question of Turko-British relations, Egypt was slightly touched by public opinion.

Culturally, the period forms again a link between 17th century dilettantism and 19th century seriousness. The period saw to a pre-eminent position the rise of the 'Arabian Nights', and popular antiquarian interest and travels in the

Near East. The 'Nights' formed the British conception of Arabic literature and Arab life. The antiquarian interest was focused on attempts at the study of hieroglyphics and mummies. The travel books on Egypt were the main sources from which English public derived their conception of political, social and economic life in that country. This fact shows clearly the significance of the part played by the travellers during our period in the story of British interest in Egypt. These three fields of cultural interest in England were characterized by a lack of erudition, by uncertain scholarship and a spirit of pleasurable amateurism. They also exhibit a distinct enthusiasm for Near Eastern studies, clearly illustrated in the vogue of the 'Nights' and travel books on the Near East. Broadly speaking there were two trends in the English attitude towards these fields of cultural interest. One was to absorb them into the English background, the other to re-value them. The first was futile, the second misleading.

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## CHAPTER I.

### Interest engendered by the Levant Company.

"England's first venture into the land of the Pharoahs was neither a very triumphant one, nor.....a very creditable one". Wood. (History of the Levant Company).

When the revolution in commerce took place in England in the 16th century, the English ventured down the coast of Europe and into the Mediterranean where they caused no little worry to the French and Venetians who were already on the scene. The all sea route round the Cape of Good Hope was not essayed at that time because of the numerous hazards from natural forces and from hostile Hispanic fleets. Up to the beginning of the 16th century, the Venetian Republic was the link between England and Eastern trade. But the decadence of this Republic at the end of the 16th century, had its effects on its outlying trading branches, one of which was the old connection with England, and after 1532 the commercial Venetian fleet discontinued its English visits. The English, then, forced their way down into the Mediterranean to seek Eastern commodities.

Apart from the early attempts at direct trade with the Levant, the first serious British relation with the Ottoman Empire came in 1580 when Edward Osborne, a great London merchant, succeeded in getting a formal grant of

twenty-two articles or Capitulations defining the liberties accorded to English subjects trafficking in Ottoman lands.<sup>(1)</sup> In the following year the Levant Company was formed, with twelve members, and having the absolute monopoly of trade with Turkey. Harborne was chosen at the end of 1582 as English Ambassador to the Porte's Court.<sup>(2)</sup>

The penetration of the English in the Levant at the close of Elizabeth's reign, indicated the first beginnings of British interests in Egypt. Egypt, because of its geographical position at the narrowest connection between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, was one of the great funnels through which the products of the Orient reached Europe, and although the discovery and development of the Cape of Good Hope route had very seriously affected the Egyptian one, it is nevertheless true that thither came still the silks, spices, dyes and drugs of the East, and the coffee of Arabia, all brought up the Red Sea by Arab traders and conveyed across the desert to Cairo and Alexandria, and for this trade the English ventured into Egypt. In 1583 Harvey Millers was appointed British consul there.<sup>(3)</sup> The earliest reference to the

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1. Hukluyt, V, P.P.168-9.

2. Wood, A. History of the Levant Company, P.P. 5-13.

3. Ibid. P. 15.



commencement of British trade with Egypt was in the same year when ships were being sent to Alexandria to exchange tin, lead and kerseys for drugs and spices.<sup>(4)</sup> Hakluyt's detailed notes upon the trade of that port, made about the same time, also serve to show the interest that was being taken in England in the trade.<sup>(5)</sup> English ships are mentioned at Alexandria in 1586, and 1587; pepper was being bought in Cairo by English factors; Aldersey found some of his countrymen living there,<sup>(7)</sup> and in 1601 Staper dispatched a vessel of his own to Egypt.<sup>(8)</sup>

British exports to Egypt comprised chiefly woollen cloth. From the outset of British commercial relations with Egypt, there could have been no flourishing market for this article. It is strange indeed that the English mission headed by Sanderson<sup>(9)</sup> which was sent to Egypt in 1586 to investigate the conditions and possibilities of British trade

4. Cal. S.P. Spanish, 1580-6, P.433.

5. Hakluyt, V, P.P.272-4.

6. Cal.S.P. Venetian 1581-91, P.204; H.M.C.Salisbury, III, P.279.

7. Hakluyt, VI, P.45.

8. Sanderson, Travels of (1584-1602), P.214.

9. Ibid, P.P.131-6.

with Egypt, held out in their reports good hopes of the profitable disposal of woollen cloth. First the majority of the population in Egypt could not afford such an expensive commodity. Secondly there was but little prospect for such an article in a warm climate like that of Egypt. A shrewd British traveller, Sandys, who visited Egypt in 1610, predicted the failure of this market when he commented that 'the English have so ill utterance for their warm clothes in these hot countries that I believe they will rather suffer their ships to rot in the river than continue that trade any longer'.<sup>(10)</sup>

British traders, moreover, being unaccustomed to Levantine commercial dealings, found the Egyptian market a tricky one. For Arab traders in Egypt obtained knowledge in advance from *Judda* about the quantity and quality of goods, with the result that on the arrival of European vessels at Alexandria, the prices of these Oriental goods promptly increased and these vessels had to wait in the port for some months till the prices decreased.<sup>(11)</sup> Neither were the ruling Beys less greedy in dealing with the Franks. The Porte's sovereignty in the country was nominal, and its treaties or agreements with European states were never meant to be respected by these Beys. No wonder the Beys took the

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10. *G. Sandys. Travels. London 1637. P. 122.*

11. *Sanderson. P.P. 131-6.*



Capitulations lightly and imposed heavily on traders. At Alexandria there was 10<sup>8</sup> duties contrary to the Capitulations which indicated only 36.<sup>(12)</sup>

Over and above all, the chief motive which urged the English merchants to Egypt, the desire to procure (the) richly prized commodities was disappearing gradually at the beginning of the 17th century. The Dutch and the English East India Companies began to pour these commodities into Europe at such low prices, that the Levant Company found it profitable to re-export these articles from England to Turkey and sell them, after the double journey, cheaper than similar articles which had come over to the Levant by the old trade routes.<sup>(13)</sup> This factor is of major importance. For in it is the main incentive in the Company's opposition to the attempts at opening the overland route through Egypt in the second half of the 18th century.<sup>(14)</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that the

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. See Chapters V, VI, VII.

Levant Company dismissed its consul, Benjamin Bishop, in 1601 and refused to appoint another in his place.<sup>(15)</sup>

But the decision of the Company or rather the rupture of direct trade between England and Egypt did not mean the withdrawal of British traders from that country. In the local trade between Alexandria and other Levantine ports, they took an active part. Egypt exported large quantities of flax and linen goods, hides, and rice to Italy, Greece and Syria, and corn to Constantinople, and it was in this local traffic that British traders in Egypt participated. Thus in 1602 the ship Angel took out from London cloth, tin and lead to be sold at Algiers, Tunis and Alexandria, and in the last-mentioned port the captain was instructed to try to get a cargo of leather for Leghorn.<sup>(16)</sup>

The following year, <sup>here</sup> is mention of an English ship from Alexandria selling spices at Modon,<sup>(17)</sup> and again in 1623 of another vessel trading between Alexandria and Venice,<sup>(18)</sup> while d'Arvieux travelled from Smyrna to Egypt

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15. Wood, P. 75 et seq.

16. Cal.S.P. Venetian, 1603-7, P.92.

17. Ibid 1592-1603, P.518.

18. Ibid 1623-5, P.125.



in 1657 in an English ship which had been freighted by some Turkish merchants to carry goods and slaves to Egypt.<sup>(19)</sup>

British Ambassadors to Constantinople were continuously alive to the necessity of appointing a consul in Egypt. As long as there were British traders in Egypt, the protection of a consul was indispensable. Sir Thomas Bendysh, the British Ambassador, without permission from London, commissioned a man in 1657 to act as English consul in Egypt.<sup>(20)</sup> The man appears to have been Bendysh's own son, who certainly had trading interests in Egypt and was acting as consul there a few years later. The Company refused to acknowledge the appointment. In 1663 a resolution of the Company reaffirmed its determination to be drawn into no commitments in Egypt. 'There being at Cairo a person remaining under

19. Arvieux, Laurent *d*, Mémoires (1653-79) Paris 1735, Vol.I, P.148.

20. S.P. 105. 151, Sept. 22, 1658 & Thévenot, II, P.806.

the title of consul', although 'the Company never allowed such officer there' and his presence being likely to prove of 'dangerous consequence', it was resolved to disown him.<sup>(21)</sup> In 1664 the consul in Egypt was instructed of the Company's decision. In fact, Sir Thomas Bendysh himself, when he was recalled from Constantinople by Charles II after the Restoration, asked to be appointed consul at Cairo, believing that he could establish a factory there with good results; but the Company refused to sanction the idea.<sup>(22)</sup> In 1668 Sir Daniel Harvey, the British Ambassador, was forbidden to try to develop trade with Egypt on the grounds that it was 'of small consequence to the English and the scale not proper for *our* ships or for the vent of our native commodities, but (on the contrary) liable to *avarias* and other mischief, which, whatever the occasion, are likely to fall at last upon the Company'.<sup>(23)</sup> To Lord Chandos *it* wrote 'We desire your Lordship to discourage and discountenance the trade to Alexandria

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21. S.P. 105. 152, Sept. 15 and 16, 1663.

22. S.P. 105. 112 Company to Winchilsea, Oct. 21, 1661.

23. S.P. 105. 152, Dec. 4, 1668.

all you can, and we think those that are concerned in it do the least deserve any of your care'.<sup>(24)</sup>

Sir William Trumbull was also told in 1688 'It is no little trouble unto us that so many ships are concerned in the hazardous trade of Alexandria'.<sup>(25)</sup>

This letter shows clearly that traffic with Egypt must have been growing in spite of official opposition. The Company, bewildered by this, wrote to Lord Chandos in 1686 that 'if it rained gold wee should not think it worth the while to goo and fetch it' (at Alexandria).<sup>(26)</sup>

Either under the continuous pressure of successive British Ambassadors to Constantinople and merchants in Egypt, or convinced at last of the inconvenience of leaving the affairs of British traders in the hands of the French consul at a time when the two states were at war, the Levant Company at the turn of the 17th century made its second attempt to set up trade with Cairo. In 1697 Miles Fleetwood was appointed consul there.<sup>(27)</sup> In 1700 a vice-consul was appointed at Alexandria.<sup>(28)</sup> All

24. S.P. 105. 114, P.345.

25. H.M.C. Downshire, I. P.295.

26. S.P. 105. 152, Company to Chandos, Aug. 14, 1686.

27. S.P. 115. 114, P.P. 331,406-7.

28. S.P. 105. 115, Company to Paget, May 1700.



evidence points to a steady and regular British trade in Egypt up to the middle of the 18th century. By 1747 there were nine merchants in Cairo.<sup>(29)</sup> The following figures, which indicate the number of English trading ships in the Levant between 1733 and 1736, prove that English trade with Alexandria was not altogether neglected.<sup>(30)</sup>

<u>Years.</u>	<u>Number of ships on which impositions were paid.</u>	<u>Ports of origin.</u>
1733	9	7 from Smyrna 2 " Alexandria
1734	10	6 from Smyrna 1 " Alexandria 3 " Scandercon
1735	7	3 from Scandercon 3 " Alexandria 1 " Smyrna

29. S.P.105. 118. Company to Porter, May 12, 1757.

30. Wood. P. 158.

<u>Years.</u>	<u>Number of ships on which impositions were paid.</u>	<u>Ports of origin.</u>
1736	15	10 from Smyrna 3 " Acre 1 " Alexandria 1 " Cyprus

Moreover, there was an unbroken line of British consuls in Egypt up to 1754.<sup>(31)</sup> At first coffee seems to have been the main article purchased at Alexandria, but from 1735 onwards this was displaced by cotton wool, senna, gum arabic, and sal-ammoniac.<sup>(32)</sup>

The Company's second attempt to trade with Cairo failed. Political conditions in Egypt were very unsettled, and nowhere in the Ottoman Empire was the Sultan's sovereignty

### 31. Appendix. II.

32. The Company's register books (S. P. 168, 169) show that duties were paid annually on at least one ship trading to Alexandria. They were levied on two ships in 1733 and on three in 1735.

so relaxed. With the Beys in factions, fighting over power, trade was bound to languish. Short-sighted, ignorant and disinterested except in procuring gold whenever it could be found, the Beys imposed heavily on Frank merchants. In 1682 the Ambassadors to Constantinople combined to petition the Grand Signior against the 'intolerable burdens' placed upon their nationals in Cairo, and threatened to abandon the trade there. (33) In 1661 Winch Isea wrote to the Pasha of Egypt recommending to his protection the 'ruined estate' of the English merchants who had been violently oppressed by his predecessors. (34) In one year, Thevenot saw the French consul mulcted of 80,000- 100,000 piastres, and saw him and the English consul several times unjustly imprisoned. (35) The action of Ibrahim Bey, the Governor of Cairo, who turned the English consul out of his house and extorted several sums of money

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33. Cal.S.P. Venetian, 1621-7, P.243.

34. H.M.C. Finch, I, P.P.161-2.

35. II, P.P. 808-11.



from him by violence, was a typical illustration of the difficulties against which the merchants had to struggle.

The English trade, moreover, could not stand competition with the French who possessed a very strong position in the country amounting almost, at the beginning of the 18th century, to a monopoly. In Cairo alone in 1702<sup>(36)</sup> there were fifty French merchants, and there were also French settlements both in Alexandria and Rosetta. At the same time there were only two Englishmen living in Cairo and one at Alexandria.<sup>(37)</sup> While the Beys could afford to wear English cloths and buy English arms and watches, the peasants could afford only the lighter, and more durable articles supplied by France, Italy and Germany<sup>(38)</sup>. In a country like Egypt

36. Wood, P.165.

37. Masson, P. Histoire du commerce francais dans le Levant au 17<sup>e</sup> siecle. Paris 1896, P.402.

38. Hamilton, W. Aegyptiaco, P.342.

where the ruling class had reduced the peasantry to starvation, British luxury goods had no outlet. In essence, however, the decline of British trade in Egypt in the second half of the 18th century, was an aspect of its general decline in the Levant. While British exports to Turkey 1780-1790 totalled approximately £103,000<sup>(39)</sup>, France in the late 18th century had as 'le total de ce commerce.....en marchandises à environ 18 à 19 millions dont les draps font plus de la moitié'.<sup>(40)</sup> The French cheaper navigation, 'their preference in the general demand for clothes, their exclusive articles of red-cloth caps etc. are equally applicable as causes of decline in our factories at Smyrna and Constantinople as in Aleppo'.<sup>(41)</sup> The prevalent view of historians

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39. Russell, 9. P.11. *The later history of the Levant Company. 1753-1820* (thesis).

40. Comte de Saint-Priest. *Memoire sur l'Ambassade en Turquie* P.327.

41. Russell, P.12.



that the chief reason of the failure of British trade in the Levant in the late 18th century was due to French competition, is open to question. For what benefit did British traders derive from the fall of France when the internal chaos in that country in 1790 affected seriously her commercial relations? None.

In the following year British traders withdrew from Aleppo 'the richest and most remote of the English colonies in the Levant'.<sup>(42)</sup> The fact is that the decline of the Company was mainly due to its intrinsically monopolistic nature and the meagre purchasing power of the Ottoman domains because of their low economic standards.

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42. G. Abbott, Turkey and the Great Powers, London 1916. P.122.

In 1754 the Levant Company resolved to abolish the consulate at Cairo 'by reason of the uncertainty of success and the certainty of a great and growing annual charge attending it',<sup>(43)</sup> and the books of the consulate were ordered to be transferred to Cyprus. Richard Harris, the consul in Egypt, accordingly placed English affairs under the protection of his Dutch colleague and withdrew early in 1757.<sup>(44)</sup> Thus the second attempt to foster commercial relations with Egypt failed.

The time was, however, rapidly approaching when England's interests in Egypt were to assume a much more vital importance than that ever envisaged by the Levant Company; for as the century progressed, factors

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43. S.P. 105. 118 Company to Porter, Sept. 17, 1754.

44. Ibid, May 12, 1757.

both in Egypt and India became visible which soon caused the re-orientation of British interest in Egypt, created the 'India factor' and made the land of the Pharoahs a matter of international significance.

In the following chapters attempts will be made to study this re-orientation of British interest in that country. As for the Levant Company, its decision in 1754 to close the consulate at Cairo, did not prevent some of the

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British traders from remaining there and

participating in the local Levantine trade.

Murray, British Ambassador to Constantinople, issued

in 1767 a patent to a Mr. Marion<sup>(45)</sup> to act as

vice-consul at Cairo. In 1773 he also appointed

a Greek, Constantine Macri, to serve as English

agent at Alexandria.<sup>(46)</sup> The Company disclaimed all

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45. S.P. 105.119. Company to Murray, July 31, 1767.

46. S.P. 105.12 Company to Murray, Aug. 17, 1773.



responsibility and steadily refused to revive its former consulate at Cairo.<sup>(47)</sup> Although British Levantine trade in Egypt might have been affected by the appearance of the Russian fleets in the Mediterranean and the revolt of Ali Bey, it nevertheless revived when conditions again became settled in the Levant. In spite of the official opposition to foster relations with Egypt, British commerce with Egypt was considered in other quarters. In 1772 Edward Wortley Montague, who was well-acquainted with conditions in the Levant, presented a scheme to D. Hays, the British consul at Aleppo, the aim of which was to solve the problem of purchasing silk from Syria.<sup>(48)</sup> As the export of

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47. Ibid.

48. B.S.P. 110.42. P.P.82-3. D.Mays to Cazalet & Cooke, 8 Sept. 1772 & 20 Nov. 1772, P.134.

bullion to the Levant was prohibited and British woollen cloth could not repay Syrian silk, Montague suggested establishing a market in Egypt for woollen cloth and paying for Syrian silk with bullion. The scheme was never attempted and commercial relations between the Company and Egypt continued to decline. At the end of the 18th century, only one vessel touched annually at Alexandria from Britain.<sup>(49)</sup> In 1800, it was not even known by some English merchants whether or not Egypt lay within the Levant Company's privilege.<sup>(50)</sup>

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49. Russell, P.15.

50. Ibid, P.4.





## CHAPTER II

Antiquarian research

'Make mummy of my flesh, and sell  
me to the apothecaries!

Shirley: The Bird in a cage (1633)

In the Middle Ages, English knowledge of ancient Egypt was based almost entirely upon the Old Testament, and even when this knowledge was supplemented, during the Renaissance, by that gained from early Greek writers, it remained meagre and grossly inaccurate. Neither the accounts of the imaginative travellers of the 16th nor those of the early 17th centuries helped to correct these errors. Perhaps the classical example of this kind of misconception is that relating to the Pyramids. R.Knolles<sup>(1)</sup> relates that some travellers, having climbed to the top of the Pyramids, reported that 'for the great height of them a man cannot shoot an arrow so high as the Midst of the lower Tower whereon the Spire standeth'. What was his visual picture of the Pyramids? What was the spire?, the lower tower?.. If he, who was steeped in things Levantine could betray such travesty of imagination what idea did other men have of the Pyramids? Marlowe<sup>(2)</sup> refers to the Pyramids 'which Julius Caesar brought from Africa'. There he probably means 'obelisk' as the two words were used indiscriminately. The confusion between the two words may have caused the muddled conception of the shape of the Pyramids; on almost all maps and views during the 16th and early 17th centuries, they are drawn

1. Generall History of the Turkes, ed. 1687, i.370  
2. Doctor Faustus, III, i.46f.



as tapering sharply; sometimes as spires, and once like little match-boxes set on end<sup>(3)</sup>

The pioneering British antiquarian interest in Egypt was opened in the first half of the 18th century by the visit of antiquaries and antiquity lovers such as Dr. Shaw, R. Pococke, Dr. Perry, Lord Charlemont and Lord Sandwich, often without adequate scholarly research. The Gentleman of Addison's first Spectator, had this to record about his antiquarian researches in Egypt: 'I made a voyage to Grand Cairo on purpose to take the measure of a pyramid and as soon as I had set myself right in that particular, returned to my native country with great satisfaction'<sup>(4)</sup>; or Lord Charlemont, who, according to Johnson, had nothing to tell of his travels except a story of a large serpent he had seen in one of the Pyramids<sup>(5)</sup>

The period between 1738 and 1798 is characterized by a number of amateur antiquaries whose greatest contribution is in their all-round description of Egypt and its antiquities. These sixty years also reflect a spirit of dilettantism which colours antiquarian researches. It should be remembered, however, that this was the age of Stukeley and Needham with their serious studies directed to the solving of hieroglyphics, and Professor Blumenbach who contributed an original dissertation on Egyptian mummies.

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3. See, e.g., Munster, *Cosmography*, ed.cit. 1127 and 1134, H.W.Davis, Bernard,, and his *Journey to the Holy Land*, plate 28; Sandys, *Relation of a Journey*, pp.5c and 128.

4. J. Baikie, *A Century of Excavation in the land of the Pharaohs* p.9.

5. Ibid.

# A. The Egyptian Society.

The works of Pococke, Shaw, Norden, Perry and other British antiquaries of the first half of the 18th century stimulated an interest already aroused in the study of Egyptian antiquities so much so that an 'Egyptian Society' was founded in December, 1741, the purpose of which was 'the promoting and preserving Egyptian and other ancient learning'. The Society had its origin (as so many other societies have had) in a dinner<sup>(6)</sup>

This was held at the Lebeck's Head, Chandos Street, Charing Cross, on December 11th, 1741, (The Feast of Isis). Lord Sandwich, Captain Norden, Dr. Pococke, and Dr. Perry were there to found the Society. Lord Sandwich was elected Sheik (President) of the Society. At that first meeting, Charles Stanhope, Martin Folkes, Dr. W. Stukeley, Thomas Dampier and J. Milles were elected members, 'and being present were immediately admitted': they were likewise 'styled founders of the Society'<sup>(7)</sup>

There are quite a few references to the Egyptian Society (sometimes mistakenly called Egyptian Club)<sup>(8)</sup> Some details of its history are contained in a letter from Stukeley to Maurice Johnson, published by T.G.Pettigrew in his paper on 'The Spalding Society of Gentlemen' in the Journal of the British Archaeological Association,<sup>(9)</sup> another reference occurs in

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6. W.R.Dawson, 'The First Egyptian Society', The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, Vol.XXIII, London 1937, P.P.259-60.
  7. T.J.Pettigrew, The Journal of the British Archaeological Association, 7 (1852), 143-58.
  8. Dawson, Op.cit. & D.N.B. (R.Pococke)
  9. Op.cit.



Stukeley's Medalllic History of Carausius<sup>(10)</sup> (1757-9), and others in 'The Family Memoirs' of the Rev. W. Stukeley,<sup>(11)</sup> (Durham 1882), in John Nichols' Literary Anecdotes of the 18th century<sup>(12)</sup>, 1812, in the Dictionary of National Biography (under R. Pococke, A. Gordon and J. Milles) and in Wilson's biography of Alexander Gordon, Toronto, 1873<sup>(13)</sup>. Mr. W.R. Dawson also wrote a short account of the Society in the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology<sup>(14)</sup>.

The Journal of the 'Egyptian Society' is extant in manuscript form<sup>(15)</sup>. In it are recorded the minutes of the Society and drawings of some of the Egyptian and other ancient antiquities in its possession. The manuscript does

10. Preface, VI.
11. Vol. I, P. 326, Stukeley to R. Gale, 9th February, 1742.
12. Vol. V, P. 334, et seq.
13. D. Wilson, Alexander Gordon, the Antiquary, P. 23.
14. Op. cit.
15. The manuscript is in the possession of 'Egypt Exploration Society' in London. It is obviously not the 'memoirs' taken by Stukeley, and mentioned in his letter to Maurice Johnson, simply because Stukeley was absent during the last few meetings. In 1885 Walter Prideaux wrote to the Editor of 'Notes and Queries' (Vol. XI, P. 427) asking 'can any of your correspondents give me information with respect to the Egyptian Society? I possess the Journal of its transactions--'. From his description of the Journal I am convinced it is the one I consulted. He did not mention, however, how he got hold of it, and only said 'I have every reason to believe that the volume which I possess came from his (Mr. J. Milles) library'. I could not find the name of the Journal in the 'Catalogue of his (Milles) library' (B.M. Add. M. 15, 778). The Journal obviously was passed from Prideaux to the newly founded Society.



not appear to have been consulted before, for the history of the Society has not hitherto been studied in detail. In fact Nichols was probably responsible for the mistakes which were repeated after him notably by the authors of the D.N.B., and also by D. Wilson and even W. Dawson. Nichols, Wilson, Dawson and the D.N.B., cite Stukeley as the Secretary of the Society. The Journal records that, at the first meeting, 'the Society then proceeded to the choice of a Secretary, and unanimously elected the Rev. Mr. Milles'. Milles held his position until 3rd December 1742 when 'the Sheik moved that a Reis Effendi (Secretary) be chosen in the place of Mr. Milles who is absent, and Dr. Pococke being proposed it was agreed to'. Pococke's secretaryship continued to the last meeting of the Society. Another misapprehension of Nichols, the D.N.B., and D. Wilson, is their statement that Alexander Gordon succeeded Stukeley as secretary of the Society. As has just been mentioned the only two secretaries of the Society were Milles and Pococke. What is more, Gordon does not seem to be among the names of the members, nor does his name appear among those present at any of the meetings, nor does he appear to have been proposed for membership by any member.

The Journal starts<sup>(16)</sup> by giving a list of the names

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16. The pages are not numbered.

7 of the members who had not visited Egypt. This is followed by the signatures of many of the members, and on the next page, appears the drawing of a sistrum, followed by a Latin poem of fifty-two verses composed in honour of the Society by Th. Dampier and read at the meeting of 22nd January 1742, by Milles, the Secretary. Following this come the laws of the Society, the minutes of the meetings and the drawings of ninety-six medals, Egyptian, Roman and Greek.

The laws in their final shape numbered sixteen. They were not all made during the first meeting: some were added at the very last meetings. According to these laws, persons who had been in Egypt could be elected only by the Original Members (The Founders of the Society) and would be admitted immediately<sup>(17)</sup>. Others who had never visited Egypt were proposed for the next meetings and admitted on obtaining two thirds of the votes of the members present<sup>(18)</sup>. This voting was subsequently changed to the unanimous suffrage of all the members present, the quorum being fixed at ten<sup>(19)</sup>. According to the third law, all other affairs of the Society were to be determined by 'a majority of voices by Ballot'.

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17. Law 1.

18. Law 2.

19. Law 11.



The fourth law ruled that the number of the Society should not exceed thirty, except 'any person be proposed who has been in Egypt', but this was amended by law 15 which declared 'the number of the members of this Society who have not been in Egypt shall never exceed thirty'. The Society was to celebrate the Feast of Isis (11th December)<sup>(20)</sup>.

The entrance fee was a guinea<sup>(21)</sup>, and there does not seem to have been a yearly subscription. Moreover, a member 'usually residing in Town do yearly pay five shillings towards defraying the expense of celebrating the Feast of Isis'<sup>(22)</sup> and 'every member of the Society who goes away before supper do pay half a crown'<sup>(23)</sup>. The place of any member who did not attend one or more of six successive meetings after his election, or of any member who was absent twelve successive meetings 'unless out of Town, or for any other reason to be approved of by the Society', was 'declared void'<sup>(24)</sup>. If the President or Secretary were absent from a meeting, the oldest member present officiated as Deputy Sheik

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20. Law 6.

21. Law 12.

22. Law 6.

23. Law 13.

24. Law 10.



and the youngest as Secretary<sup>(25)</sup> The sixteenth and last law curiously declared that, 'if for the future any member of the Society shall produce three several writings,.....the said member shall never be allowed to give in anything more in writing to the society.'<sup>(26)</sup>

The meetings of the Society were held every fortnight, from the first Friday in November, to the first Friday in May<sup>(27)</sup> The Society had twenty-two meetings, two of them, the 9th (23rd April, 1742) and the 13th (5th November, 1742), were adjourned. The last recorded meeting of the Society was on 16th April, 1743. The President was given the name of Sheik, and the Secretary - Reis Effendi, the treasurer (Andrew Mitchell) the Hasnedar, the collector of the reckonings (W.F. Fauquier) the Mohausil, and the inspector and examiner of the Egyptian medals (S. Leithieu<sup>l</sup>bleur) the Gumrocjee.

There were only four significant papers read in the Society, two by Dr. W. Stukeley and the other two by Dr. Pococke. At the third meeting, the Sheik's staff of office - an Egyptian sistrum - was laid before him, and Stukeley gave a learned dissertation upon it<sup>(28)</sup> His conclusion was that the sistrum was a 'rattle' to scare off birds of prey when sacrifices

25. Law 8.

26. It appears that the laws of the Society were not always strictly observed.

27. Law 5.

28. Stukeley, Carausius, P.VI et seq. The talk is not recorded in the Journal.

were made. It was on that occasion that Stukeley first made the acquaintance of the Duke of Montagu, an acquaintance which ripened into an intimate friendship. The other dissertation of Stukeley was delivered on 11th December 1742 at the celebration of the Society of the Feast of Isis (Winter Solstice) in which he dealt with the origin of the festival in Egypt and other ancient nations, attempting to connect that date with the Druids in Britain<sup>(29)</sup>.

Dr. Pococke's first dissertation was on 22nd January 1742. Lord Sandwich exhibited to the Society, a mummified Ibis and Dr. Pococke gave his talk on Ibis as a sacred bird among the Egyptians. It was in fact a narration of the accounts of that bird by Herodotus and Strabo. Pococke's second dissertation was on the 5th of March (6th meeting). At the end of the previous meeting (19th February 1742) 'Dr. Pococke.....acquainted the Society, that he had a Mummy, which he proposed to have open'd before the Society if they pleased' and the Society agreed 'that a committee be appointed for that purpose and that they be desired to meet at his Grace the Duke of Richmond's house...' At the next meeting Thomas Dampier, on behalf of the committee, gave the Society a detailed description of the coffin and the mummy, after which Dr. Pococke proceeded with a very interesting talk on the methods of making coffins and embalming in ancient

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29. This dissertation is in a separate part inside the Journal.



Egypt. Again he seems to have faithfully followed the accounts of Herodotus on that particular point, but supported Herodotus by his own observations in Egypt<sup>(30)</sup>. Apart from these four dissertations, members of the Society actually did no more than presenting some of their curiosities; the most generous contributors were the President, Norden, Pococke and W. Leithieulleur. Strangely enough, one of the problems that confronted the Society was finance. Money was needed for making engravings and drawings of the medals in the Society's possession. On 2nd April 1742 (8th meeting), Dr. Pococke showed the design of a copper plate for the series of Egyptian medals proposed to be engraved by the Society, but consideration of this question was deferred in four successive meetings 'till the expense of it be known'. It was not before 28th May 1742 (12th meeting) that the Society could agree to pay £13-17-0 for the engravings and drawings. Immediately after that the twelfth law was made!

The Egyptian Society was one of the first bodies established at the very outset of the Romantic movement. It fostered archaeological interests but only a few of its members were noted antiquaries. In contrast to W. Stukeley, the eminent antiquarian, and Pococke and Norden who were perhaps better known as travellers than antiquaries, the other members

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30. Herodotus account is, however, one of the best on mummification among the Egyptians. See W.R. Dawson and G. E. Elliott, *Egyptian Mummies*, London 1924, P.5 et seq.



were scientists, statesmen, business men, diplomats, but all were 'philo-Aegyptians'. That this society was popular is proved by the fact that at every meeting no less than two new members were proposed. This culminated in the law to restrict the number of members. The Earl of Sandwich, President of the Society, is a typical example of the early Romantic. He had been in the Levant and Egypt, and appears to have been fascinated by the life of the Arabs. From Dr. W. Stukeley we learn that when he was first introduced to Lord Sandwich he found his 'Lord put on the habit of the Arabs inhabiting those oriental countrys, the same as their founder, Ismail's. 'Tis called camissa, a black short gown, with open sleeves, loose, a slit on the breast, for convenient putting on, reaching down only to the knees, the body and legs otherwise naked. Many rings of pervert put on the neck, small of the legs, wrists, earrings, noserings'<sup>(31)</sup>. The constitution of the Society serves to show the muddled conceptions in the minds of the early Romantics with regard to the East. The Society was founded to study Egyptian antiquities, but the President held an Arabic title, and the Secretary, the treasurer, the examiner of the medals and the collector of money held Turkish or Persian titles.

The circumstances in which the Society dispersed are somewhat obscure. Dr. Stukeley enthusiastically stated

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31. Stukeley to Maurice Johnson, Op.cit.

in 1750 that 'the famous Egyptian Society.....flourished extremely for the first three years' <sup>(32)</sup> This is open to question at least as far as the last year is concerned. In that year the President was absent from three meetings out of seven. The Society started this last year by seven members attending the first meeting, the second was attended by nine, the third by ten, the fourth by thirteen, the fifth by ten, the sixth by five, and the last by ten. No research was done during the year and the meetings were very short. All this together with the fact that Dr. Stukeley himself did not attend the last six meetings may account for his inaccuracy.

It is possible that some members joined the Society for personal profit, for curiously enough, Dr. Perry, who was one of the founders and a friend of Lord Sandwich <sup>(33)</sup>, moved as early as 28th May 1742, that a law be made to 'oblige every member of the Society to purchase one copy of every book which either has or shall hereafter be published by any member of this Society'.....'After debate', the Society 'ordered that the consideration of this law be postponed to the next winter'. Dr. Perry, however, was no less dogged in pursuing his motion during the next winter. On the 3rd December 1742 he put his motion amended only by this phrase 'if the book be approved of' by the Society. This motion was not passed, 'nine were against it, and only two were for it'. On 21st January, 18th February, and the 18th March,

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32. Ibid.

33. Perry, A view of the Levant...etc London 1743 Preface.



Dr. Perry again put his motion but was defeated on every occasion. That Dr. Perry had apparently been working for personal benefit is borne out by the fact that the Society, immediately after the last defeat of his motion, that is at the last meeting but two, probably as a special favour to him, announced that it be recommended to every member of the Society to purchase (Dr. Perry's) Book of Physics'. At the last meeting, however, Dr. Perry was apparently trying to secure a revision of the question of purchasing the books, but he was faced with the 16th law. He moved 'that the 16th law do stand in force only to the first day of November next, which passed in the negative' and the Society unanimously decided that the motion which 'was delivered in writing be burnt': this decision was 'accordingly executed',<sup>(34)</sup> Dr. Stukeley in his letter to Maurice Johnson, referring to the dissolution of the Society, made what may be a cryptic allusion to Dr. Perry, by averring that 'I suppose, when ambition seizes the minds of mortal men, literature flies of course',<sup>(35)</sup>

I have not found that any research on Egyptian antiquities was undertaken by the Society of Dilettante, in the 18th century. The Society of Antiquaries had from the beginning specified that its field of research be restricted

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34. With this sentence ends the Journal of the Egyptian Society.

35. Op.cit.



to Great Britain and Ireland. In 1753 Dr. Robert Clayton<sup>(36)</sup>, Bishop of Clogher, translated 'A Journal from Grand Cairo to Mount Sinai and Back again' from a manuscript written by the Profetta of Egypt in company with the 'Missionaries de Propaganda Fide' at Grand Cairo 1722. The Bishop dedicated the translation to the Society of Antiquaries. In his dedication, he thought it proper to communicate to the Society a translation of the Journal; 'in hopes of exciting you, who are now erected into a Society of Antiquities, to make some enquiry into those ancient characters, which, as we learn from it (the Journal), are discovered in great numbers in the Wilderness of Sinai at a place well known by the name of 'Gebel el Mokatab'....By carefully copying a good quantity of these letters, I should apprehend that the ancient Hebrew character, which is now lost, may be recovered....I imagine, if a person sent on purpose to live for some time at Tor on the coast of the Red Sea, he might make such an acquaintance with the Arabs living near the Written mountains, by the civility of his behaviour, and by frequently making them small presents, that it would be no great difficulty in six months, or thereabouts, to attain the desired end'. 'I do not know' he concluded, 'whom to apply to more properly than to your honourable Society to look out for a suitable person to be employed on this errand. As to the expense, I am willing to bear

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36. The name is mistakenly mentioned in Prince Ibrahim-Hilmy's Bibliography (The literature of Egypt and the Soudan Vol. I P.64) as Robert Berkeley.

any proportion of it which you shall think proper, in order to have this design thoroughly effected<sup>(37)</sup>. Nichols relates that the Bishop proposed to pay £100 per annum for five years. Mr. Wise, an eminent antiquary, wrote to the Society late in the same year hoping that 'the gentlemen addressed will pay a proper regard to the proposal of the Bishop of Clogher, and will send some qualified person to take an exact copy of that very antique inscription on the rock at Mount Sinai'<sup>(38)</sup>. The Society, however, declined to undertake the project. On 22nd November 1753, they replied that from 'the nature of (their) constitution which principally respects British antiquities', 'as well' as from the fact that their only revenue was derived from annual contributions, they were 'wholly incapable' of contributing to the scheme<sup>(39)</sup>. The project seems to have been dropped, but the question was finally settled when Worteley Montague visited Sinai and communicated to the Royal Society his investigations on these inscriptions.

In the journal of the Society of Antiquaries, 'The Archeologia', there appears to be no article of notice, at any rate in the second half of the 18th century, except Dr. Woodward's discourse on the wisdom of the ancient Egyptians...concerning their Arts, their sciences, and their Learning, their Laws, their

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37. Op.cit. P.P.1-2.

38. G.M. 1753, P.331, and Nichols' II, 242.

39. Nichols, II, 243.



Government, and their Religion' 1786<sup>(40)</sup>. The article illustrates the worst conception of ancient Egyptian civilisation in the 18th century England. 'For I cannot assent' he says, 'to the common opinion that there was even really any considerable learning among the Egyptians'. In the words of T.J. Pettigrew, 'he affects to find them abounding in all that is bad, and deficient in all that is good'<sup>(41)</sup>. Dr. Woodward's weakness lay in the fact that he looked upon ancient Egyptians through Western eyes. As the Gentlemen's Magazine put it 'Dr. Woodward, forgets, that, however improved was the age in which he lived,<sup>(42)</sup> or the present, the Egyptian was an area of illumination to its contemporaries. Nobody can doubt that extraordinary efforts were made in science even at that distant time: a comparison, therefore, of the ancient nations with the moderns, on the terms here stated, is as injurious as that which Voltaire draws between the Israelites and the present Europeans'<sup>(43)</sup>.

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40. VOL.IV. 1786

41. T.J. Pettigrew, 'Egyptian Mummies', P.29.

42. Dr. Woodward belongs to the first half of the 18th century.

43. G.M. 47 (1787) P.337.



## B. The Study of hieroglyphics.

The dominant theory in Europe in the 18th century about the hieroglyphics, was that they were sacred characters originally made to be employed for secret purposes and therefore did not form a real written language. Athanasius Kircher was the forerunner in advancing this theory in the 17th century, a theory which held a pre-eminent position among English antiquarians in the 18th<sup>(44)</sup>. British travellers in Egypt in the first half of the 18th century did nothing more, so far as hieroglyphics are concerned than support the theory of Kircher<sup>(45)</sup>. However, at the turn of the first half of the 18th century and in the sixties, the old theory was seriously challenged by Bishop W. Warburton and by T. Needham. T.J. Pettigrew wrote in his 'Encyclopaedia Aegyptiaca' 1842, about Warburton that he 'is perhaps entitled to be considered as the first in modern times to have entertained an opinion, that the hieroglyphics or sacred characters were not so denominated as being employed solely for sacred purposes<sup>(46)</sup>'. Mr. Henri Gauthier in his article<sup>(47)</sup> 'Un Précurseur de Champollion au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', holds the same view. One might go further and

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44. M. Henri Gauthier's Bibliography of works on hieroglyphics before Champollion is very inaccurate as far as British antiquaries are concerned. He only mentioned Gordon and Warburton out of 28 works done before 1798.

45. See R. Pococke and a counter-argument by Warburton in Warburton's 'Divine Legation' Vol. II. P.P. 65 et seq, footnotes

46. P. 24.

47. Bulletin de l'Inst. Franc. d'Archeologie Orientale, T. v., 1906.

refer to John Wilkins, a 17th century divine, who after mentioning the popular theory of hieroglyphics in his 'Essay towards a Real character....' 1668, added 'and it seems to me questionable, whether the Egyptians did not at first use their Hieroglyphics upon the same account (as the Mexicans), namely, for the want of letters' (48). Warburton, however, devoted a large section of his 'Divine Legation of Moses' Vol.II. Part I. 1738-1741, to the study of hieroglyphics, and stated that the idea stamped in the minds of English and European antiquarians that hieroglyphics were 'invented by the Egyptian priests, in order to hide and 'secrete' their wisdom from the knowledge of the vulgar' was responsible for the 'much obscurity and confusion....which hath involved this part of ancient learning....' (49). He thought that hieroglyphics were an abridged method of figures by which the difficulty of communicating knowledge by picture could be overcome. Warburton classified abridgment of figures generally into three categories in which:

1. The principal circumstance in the subject stood for the whole,
2. The instrument of the thing, whether real or metaphorical, represented the thing itself,

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48. P.12.

49. P.65.



3. One quaint resemblance or analogy recalled observations of nature or traditional superstitions.

He calls the first 'curiologic Hieroglyphics', the second 'tropical' and the third 'symbolic' (50). In a comparative study of the Mexican, Chinese and Egyptian, Warburton arrived at the conclusion that, before the institution of letters to express sounds, all characters denoted only things; 1, by representation 2, by analogy or symbols, 3 - by arbitrary institution. Among the Mexicans, he stated, the first method was principally in use, the Egyptians chiefly cultivated the second, and the Chinese, in course of time, reduced almost their characters to the third (51). It must be remembered that Warburton did not deny that hieroglyphics were used 'at length' for the purpose of concealing knowledge, he only refuted the argument that they were first 'invented' for such purpose. To Pettigrew 'it is only surprising that he (Warburton) ceased to extend his researches, and satisfactorily to exemplify them' (52).

A. Gordon, who, hitherto, has been mistakenly regarded as the Secretary of the Egyptian Society, wrote two essays 'towards explaining the Hieroglyphical figures on two Egyptian mummies' (53) one which belonged to Dr. R. Mead and the other (54)

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50. P.70 et seq.

51. P.77 et seq.

52. Op.cit.P.12.

53. London - 1737.

54. London - 1737.



to W. Leithieulleur. In addition, Gordon published twenty-five plates of different Egyptian antiquities<sup>(55)</sup>, and he apparently seems to have studied various hieroglyphic inscriptions. His conclusion which coincided with that of Greek writers, was that hieroglyphical inscription was not more than 'physical symbols'. It seems, nevertheless, that Gordon held the popular theory of the secrecy of the hieroglyphics. Bishop R. Clayton<sup>(56)</sup> and Sir Isaac Newton<sup>(57)</sup> pronounced almost the same view, but John Jackson in his 'Chronological antiquities....etc' announced his disagreement with the popular theory of the secrecy of the hieroglyphics.

In 1761, the publication of a remarkable book by an English Catholic divine and scientist, John Turberville Needham, started a heated controversy on the continent of Europe and in England, and led to a revival of interest in hieroglyphics among British archaeologists<sup>(58)</sup>. Needham<sup>(59)</sup>, then tutor of Charles, eldest son of Henry II<sup>th</sup> Viscount Dillon, spent several years in Italy, and whilst there he studied the obelisks at Rome and other Egyptian antiquities and especially a bust, said to be that of Isis, which he found in the Royal Museum at

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- 55. 'Twenty-five plates of all Egyptian Mummies, and other Egyptian antiquities in England' 1738.
  - 56. Op.cit.P.P.43-132. 'The Origin of Hieroglyphics'.
  - 57. Chronology, P.219 et seq.
  - 58. De Inscriptione quadam Aegyptiaca...etc. Rome, M.D.CCLXI.
  - 59. He was the first English Catholic to be admitted to the Royal Society. (January 1746-7). In 1761 he was elected F.S.A.

Turin. In his work, he sought a remarkable book in which he sought to prove the identity of the Egyptian hieroglyphics and the Chinese characters, relying mainly upon the inscriptions on the so-called 'bust of Isis', an engraving of which was inserted as a frontispiece. The monument is a black bust of a woman with two long pendant tresses of hair adorned with signs. W.R.Dawson states in 'Studies presented to F.LL.Griffith' 1932<sup>(60)</sup>, that the 'style of the bust is neither Egyptian nor Greek nor Roman, and the signs are not Egyptian hieroglyphics'. 'It is clearly a forgery'. It is difficult to understand why Needham failed to observe the entire dissimilarity between the characters inscribed on the bust and those of the obelisks and other genuine Egyptian monuments he studied. Needham, however, believed that each character on the bust had a special signification, and, struck by their resemblance to the Chinese characters, he searched the pages of a Chinese lexicon of twenty-six volumes in the Vatican Library, and satisfied himself that equivalents could there be found in ancient Chinese for all the hieroglyphics (as he supposed them to be) of the Turin bust, and by means of the modern equivalents of the old Chinese characters, aided by imagination, he translated the inscription. From his translation, Needham proceeded to draw conclusions. He believed that the spoken language of the Chinese was the same as that of the Egyptians, and that the former

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60. An 18th century Discourse on Hieroglyphics, London, 1932.  
P.P.465-73.



learned it from the latter, but he expressed the opinion that the two nations were separate, and that China was never colonized by the Egyptians.

Needham's theory created a lively interest amongst scholars, especially in Paris and London. There are indications that in some quarters at least the proposal was regarded favourably as suggesting a means by which the secret of the Egyptian hieroglyphics might be unlocked. But the theory had opponents, and opponents of weight. In Paris the eminent opponents were de Guignes who wrote the critique of Needham's book in the 'Journal des Savants' of December 1761, and Bartoli, antiquary to the King of Sardinia, who probably wrote the article in the issue of August 1762. After a long, but unavailing, correspondence to de Guignes and Bartoli, in which Needham tried to support his claims by other relevant papers (B.M.Add.MSS.21416), Needham sought for independent confirmation of his theory. He submitted his case to a committee of savants in Rome (the Dukes<sup>or</sup> Grafton and Roxburghe, the Marquis of Tavistocke, John Hincheliffe, H. James, R. Smith, Le Bailli de Breteuil, Thomas le Seur, Francois Jacquier and<sup>u</sup> Ridolfino Vanuti), and so succeeded in convincing them to the extent of attesting that on comparing 'Caractères Egyptiens pris des monumens publics à Rome et ailleurs' with 'des caractères dans le grand Dictionnaire Chinois au Vatican gravé à Pekin', they found out 'qu' une grande partie des...

29 Caractères dont quelquesuns sont composés sur le Buste dit d'Isis dans le Cabinet Royal des Antiquités à Turin, publiés



par Mr. Needham,....que nous avons examinés avec plus d'attention...nous ont été montrés dans le Dictionnaire Chinois....'(61)

In London the arrival of the solemn attestation from Rome revived a lively interest in hieroglyphics, notably in the circles of the Royal Society. Charles Marton, Principal Librarian of the British Museum and the then Secretary of the Royal Society, put down his opinion<sup>(62)</sup> which supported de Guignes and Bartoli against Needham. An interesting counter-argument was put forward by no other man than Dr. W. Stukeley. Stukeley who was born in 1687 studied medicine at Cambridge. He graduated M.B. in January 1707 - 8 and proceeded to St. Thomas's Hospital, where he was a pupil of the famous Dr. R. Mead<sup>(63)</sup>. In 1719 he took his M.D. Degree and in the following year was admitted a F.R. College of Physicians. In the meantime, Stukeley had been elected F.R.S. (20th March 1717-18) and had helped to found the Society of Antiquaries in 1718, to which body he acted as secretary for nine years. He entered the Church and was ordained at Croydon in 1729. In 1747, he was made rector of St. George the Martyr, Bloomsbury, the living of which he held until his death in March 1765. Stukeley made frequent communications to the Royal Society and Society of

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61. Ibid.

62. B.M. Add.MSS.21416.

63. W.Munk's Roll of the College of Physicians, II,71 et seq.

Antiquaries and was also a contributor to the Gentlemen's Magazine. Stukeley was enterprising and original, but often unsound, and his religious ministrations are said to have been eccentric and unconventional<sup>(64)</sup>. In 1743 Stukeley wrote a dissertation, which is still in manuscript, entitled 'On hieroglyphics and Chinese letters'. It begins with the following paragraph: 'The hieroglyphics of the Egyptians is a sacred character; that of the Chinese is civil, or a common way of writing, both probably in their original, as old as the world, but receiving great alterations and additions from time and succession of ages, persons, customs....I take them both to have been invented by the father of mankind, Adam'. The greater part of the paper is devoted to an elaboration of what the author conceived to be the origin and development of picture-writing and its evolution into sign - or alphabet writing. Although it is based principally on a study of Chinese characters (many of which are neatly and accurately drawn by way of illustration), the implication is that Egyptian hieroglyphic writing followed the same principles and the same development<sup>(65)</sup>.

It was almost twenty years after this dissertation that Needham propounded his theory, an event which rekindled the interest of Stukeley who wrote two papers, the first of which a quarto of thirteen folios, is entitled 'answer to the attestation from Rome, read at the Royal Society 27 May 1762,

64. See, D.N.B., LV.127 & G.M. May 1765, 211 et seq.

65. Dawson, Op.cit.



read at the Antiquarian Society, 1 July 1762<sup>(66)</sup>. In the first paper, after a little of the moralizing so dear to the 18th century writers, Stukeley proceeded to say that 'in the junior part of my life, among other things, I studied the Egyptian learning, there is a certain connexion, betw. all the species of Knowledg; & they further one another. I made drawings of all the obelisks, mummys, the Isiac table & whatever monuments of the Egyptians are left. I consider'd with particular attention, this hieroglyphics - & I can very easily perceive what those learned gent. from Rome, have in view; & wherein they were misguided, in their present inquiry; to make a relation betw. the Egyptian & Chinese ters<sup>(67)</sup>. Stukeley then gives the substance of the attestation from Rome, and proceeds that he 'can very readily allow, that there may be some of the Egyptian characters the same as the Chinese - they are both ideal & picturesc writing', 'but' he continues, 'it by no means proves they have the same signifcation; that there was any relation betw. them or betw. the two nations....the character cut on Egyptian monuments, are purely symbolical. They are nothing than hymns & invocations to the deity, the best idea we can have of them, is to liken em to those call'd 'Orpheus's hymns. a new character says the learned author of the life & writings of Homer, holy letters invented by the priests, to be known by none but themselves, & used by them only in divine matters'. After giving some instances of symbols

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66. Ibid.

67. Abbreviation for letters.

in hieroglyphics, Stukeley said 'the Chinese, equally wise in their way, or whoever invented this method of writing, *wt* not improbably was Adam himself, purposing to make a character, is to signify a word, not a symbol, must needs introduce many geometrical figures - hence the same are found on Egyptian monuments & in the Chinese Lexicon. & this is the true solution of the problem, *wt* those curious gentlemen at Rome, have been considering with attention'. He then devotes several pages to explain the geometrical signs in Chinese writing which resemble those of the Egyptian, but which have altogether different significations.

Stukeley's second discourse was read before the Society of Antiquaries in December 1762. It consists very largely of quotations from the writings of classical authors who mention Egyptian hieroglyphics. He gives no credit to any explanation by such writers and affirms 'I believe the true knowledg of the hieroglyphics was immersed in the extremest antiquity - so that if any skill of interpreting them, remain'd with the priests, to the time of Cambyses; after that time, the just understanding of them was lost'. The rest of the paper is mainly a repetition of the argument of the first one. The final paragraph of Stukeley's paper shows that he considered the question as fully settled, and that he had said the last word on the subject: 'this, & the two former memoirs I read to the Society, are abundantly sufficient to convince every one, that is desirous to know the truth. & I judg, the argument is fully handled'. On the last page of the manuscript



Stukeley added the following note: 'read this paper at the Antiquarian Society 9 Dec. 1762. the same day, at the Royal Society, read a paper of Wortlet Montagu's, concerning the Turin bust'.

It would appear that when the enunciation of Needham's theory was made in 1761, the President of the Royal Society, the Earl of Macclesfield, was anxious to obtain knowledge on the Turin bust, and applied to Montagu, who was about to visit Italy, for information on the subject. Montagu addressed two letters to Lord Macclesfield on the subject, the first dated Turin 17 April 1762 and the second, Rome 2 Oct. 1762. These letters were communicated to the Royal Society in 1762 and were printed as a pamphlet in the following year.<sup>(68)</sup> Montagu attacked Needham's theory from another angle, namely that the bust was a forgery and had been made locally. He arrived at this conclusion after consulting learned men in Italy; Abbe' George Winkelmann, Lavaggio and Guiseppe Simonia Assemani<sup>(69)</sup>

Although the writings of these British and European antiquarians are futile and contribute nothing to the elucidation of hieroglyphic writing, their discourses are interesting, as showing the misconceptions and prejudices against which Champolion and Young had subsequently to wage determined and persistent warfare.

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68. ~~Ch.V. P.17 footnote 2.~~ Dawson. op. cit.

69. Op.cit. Vol.II, P.394.

### C. The study of Mummies.

Apart from the fact that some of the travellers were antiquaries, they frequently brought home with them pieces of Egyptian antiquities such as mummies and masonries. In the 18th century, there was a considerable trade in monuments particularly in Alexandria. The fact that E. Irwin<sup>(70)</sup> was stressing that his collection, which he brought from Alexandria by the help of Signior Brandi, was genuine, indicates that the trade must have been a profitable one.

The guides to the Egyptian collection in the British Museum, though not complete in stating the date of acquisition of every antiquity, refer to 1767 as the earliest year of acquisition. In this year the 'limestone relief from the Waze of a high official' (No.70) was presented by John, 3rd Earl of Bute. This was followed by a 'portion of a black basalt statue' (No.819) presented by Mathew Duane in 1771. Four years later Col. W. Leithiulleur, a member of the then extinct Egyptian Society, presented to the Museum, a 'painted wooden inner coffin' from Thebes (wall case 66). The first notable collection, however, was presented to the Museum by King George III in 1776, and it virtually formed the nucleus of the Egyptian collection in the Museum. His collection consists of four pieces, a coffin (wall case 67) in the second Egyptian Room, a mummy from Thebes in the third Room (6697), and two black basalt intercolumnar slabs (926-927) in the

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70. Series of Adventures, London 1781. P.130, vol. II.



'Southern Egyptian Gallery'. The Egyptian collection in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford was formed earlier than that of the British Museum. In 1683, two stones presented by Robert Huntington, chaplain of the British factory at Aleppo, formed the beginning of this collection. In 1766 a mummy of an infant was presented by Isaac Hughes. From that time, nothing seems to have been presented before the 19th century. It is extremely difficult, almost impossible, to make an accurate and complete list of the Egyptian antiquities in England during the 18th century, since most of these were contained in private collections. A. Gordon claimed that in his twenty-five plates he had depicted 'all Egyptian mummies, and other Egyptian antiquities in England' (71). He referred to no less than fifteen collections: the British Museum, The Ashmolean, Sir Hans Sloane, Th. Robinson, Th. Frederick, Dr. Mead, E. Coke, R. Gale, A. Stuart, A. Forbes, R. Ellys, H. Smithson, M. Folkes and W. Leithieulleur. But as one can now realise how much Gordon had missed, at least as far as mummies are concerned, one can imagine how impossible it would be to attempt a complete and accurate list of these monuments and mummies. Not only travellers, but also British agents in the Near East; consuls and even ambassadors, seem to have been involved in the matter of Egyptian antiquities. The mummy in Dr. Meads's collection was sent to England by Consul Barton (1733) (72). G. Baldwin was engaged in the purchase of Egyptian antiquities for Sir R. Ainslie (73).

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71. Op.cit.

72. Gordon 'Essay...Dr.Mead'. P.1.

73. F.O. 78. Ainslie to Baldwin 13th Feb.1778.

This latter and Lord Elgin, British Ambassadors at Constantinople, were members of the Society of Dilettante, their peculiarly advantageous position giving them the opportunity of assisting and promoting the work of the Society<sup>(74)</sup> Sir R. Ainslie formed a large and important collection of oriental coins, of which a description was published by the Abbate Domenico Sestini in 1789. He also possessed a fine collection of drawings among which were plates of ancient Egyptian monuments (published in 1802, 4, 12)<sup>(75)</sup> Lord Elgin who is somewhat outside our period is well-known for his enthusiasm in collecting antiquities. When the Egyptian Question was passing through a critical stage in June 1801, Lord Elgin had every intention of visiting Egypt to 'settle the matter on the spot', but Ghorbal 'could not help suspecting that the motive was the collection of antiquities'<sup>(76)</sup>

It is particularly the exportation of Egyptian mummies to the West since the 16th century which creates a very interesting chapter in the medical and commercial history of England and Europe. In the 16th century, and the early part of the 17th, mummy formed one of the ordinary drugs, because of its bitumen content and its supposed magical powers. At the very onset of commercial relations between England and Egypt in the 16th century, English trade in mummy took place. John Sanderson, an English merchant, who was in Egypt in 1586,

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74. L.Cust, history of the Society of Dilettanti 1914, P.P.144-5.  
 75. Views in Egypt, from drawings in the possession of Sir Robert Ainslie taken during his Embassy to Constantinople.  
 76. Sh.Ghorbal, The beginnings of the Egyptian Question and the Rise of Mehemet Ali, P.189.



recorded that he 'bought allso 600 lb. for the Turkish Company (The Levant Company) in peces, and brought into England in the Hercules, together with a whole bodie' (77).

In fact, mummy was a recognised article in the Levantine and European pharmacopaeias. In 1658, Sir Thomas Browne states that 'Mummy is become merchandise, Misraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for Balsams' (78). Lord Bacon says 'Mummy hath great force in staunching the blood...' (79). To Boyle 'mummy is one of the useful medicines commended and given by our physicians for falls and bruises...' (80). The demand for mummy was greater in France than in England, and Francois I is stated by Belon (81) to have been always in the habit of carrying about with him a little packet containing some mummy mixed with pulverised rhubarb, ready to take for falls or accidents. The demand for mummy, however, was not easily met; for the authorities in Egypt were unwilling to permit the transportation of the bodies from the tombs; this encouraged fraud. Some Jews, particularly in Alexandria, entered upon a speculation to meet the demand by undertaking to embalm dead bodies and to sell them to the Christians (82).

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77. Travels in the Levant, P.P.44f.

78. Dawson & Elliot, Egyptian Mummies, P.1.

79. Sylva, Sylvarum, Cant.X.s.980.

80. Boyle's Works, Vol.II, P.451.

81. Observations de Plusieurs Singularités, et Choses Memorables, P.261.

82. T.J.Pettigrew, Egyptian Mummies, P.P.7-12.

They took all the executed criminals, and bodies of all descriptions that could be obtained, filled the head and inside of the bodies with simple asphaltum, an article of very small price, made incisions into the muscular parts of the limbs; inserted into them also the asphaltum and then bound them tightly. This being done, the bodies were exposed to the heat of the sun; they dried quickly, and resembled in appearance the truly prepared mummies. This was disclosed to Europe by Guy de la Fontaine, physician to the King of Navarre, during his visit to Egypt in 1564. M. de la Fontaine communicated the result of his inquiries to his friend Ambrose Paré, the notable French surgeon. The second half of the 17th century saw a decline of the Jewish trade in mummy. Guyon<sup>(83)</sup> accounts for this by a story of a quarrel between a Jewish merchant of mummy and his slave after which the slave sent a communication to the Pasha about the trade of his master and this was followed by a heavy taxation of the Jewish traders which resulted in the decline of this particular trade. The authenticity of this story is difficult to establish, but it is somewhat naive on the part of Pettigrew to accept it as the only reason for the decline of the demand for mummy as a drug<sup>(84)</sup>. There is no doubt that the very severe attack which de la Fontaine and his colleague, Ambrose Paré waged on 'this wicked kinde of drugge' was responsible, in the main, for the decline in the demand. Although by the 18th century

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83. Ibid.

84. Ibid.



the demand for mummy as a drug had almost vanished, it was still widely accepted as such in the Levant. John Hawkins (1758-1804) had some considerable portions of mummies which he had brought from a druggist at Constantinople.<sup>(85)</sup>

There was, however, a demand for mummy for the purpose of antiquarian researches in the 18th century, and this trade was centred in Sakarra and Thebes, and was carried on by the inhabitants of Upper Egypt. Because of their great interest in Egyptian antiquities, the British travellers in Egypt in the first half of the 18th century, brought mummies home with them, e.g., R. Pococke and Dr. Perry whose mummy came into the possession of Pettigrew, who from this circumstance, conceived an interest in Egyptian antiquities<sup>(86)</sup>. Col. W. Leithieulleur was another and he presented his mummy to the British Museum. From R. Dalton, Keeper of the pictures and antiquities of King George II and III, who was in Egypt in the company of Lord Charlemont in 1749, we learn of the traffic in mummies carried out by the natives of Sakkara<sup>(87)</sup>. Robin Feddon in an article on the 'British Travellers in Egypt before 1800' states that 'The demand for mummy did not die until the end of the 18th century'<sup>(88)</sup>. This is hardly true since we

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85. J.F. Blumenbach. 'Observations on some Egyptian Mummies opened in London'. Phil. Trans. Abr. XVII 392. 1794. P.P. 181-2.

86. Dawson, 'Demonstrations upon mummies. in A chapter in the History of Egyptology' The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology. Vol. XX.

87. Remarks on prints...relative to the manners, customs, etc. of the present inhabitants of Egypt. London, 1781. P. 47.

88. 'The Bulletin' issued by the Egyptian Education Bureau, London. Jan. 1948. P. 8.

learn from Denon at the end of the 18th century that there was a regular trade in mummy bitumen carried on by the fellahins of Qurneh<sup>(89)</sup>.

The antiquarian researches on mummies fell into four groups:

- a - as a source for the study of hieroglyphics.
- b - the study of the methods of embalming among the ancient Egyptians.
- c - the study of the sculpture and painting of the cases and sarcophagi as a method for indicating the period at which the mummy was prepared.
- d - as a source for the study of racial origin of the Egyptians.

Some of the mummies which were transported to England, were especially noted for their hieroglyphic inscriptions. It has already been referred to ~~in~~ Gordon's dissertations on the mummies of W. Leithiulleur and Dr. Mead. The third mummy bearing hieroglyphics, well-known as the 'Cambridge Mummy', belonged to George Townshend (1715-69). Conyers Middleton studied its hieroglyphics, but his conclusions did not differ from those of Gordon and the popular theory of hieroglyphics<sup>(90)</sup>. The methods of embalming were analysed by

89. J. Baikie, *Egyptian Papyri and Papyrus Hunting*. London. 1925, P.P. 50-1.

90. *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. IV, P. 170.



practically every antiquary interested in Egyptian mummies. It is pointless to state their views on embalming since they are all taken from Herodotus, Strabo and others.

The study of mummies as a source of information on the racial origin of the Egyptians was first begun in England in the first half of the 18th century, but took a more serious line in the second half. The popular theory, though ridiculed by some, was that the ancient Egyptians were of negroid origin. In his dissertation, Gordon had come to this conclusion<sup>(91)</sup>.

In 1792 John Frederick Blumenbach, a German Professor of physics in the University of Gottingen, and a Foreign Fellow of the Royal Society, was in London. He made a very close investigation of the two mummies, belonging to Dr. M. Garthshore (1732-1812) and to Dr. J. Lettsome (1744-1815).

These two were similar in shape but very different in content. According to his account 'the striking difference in the two (mummies), rather excited than satisfied my curiosity....'<sup>(92)</sup> He, therefore, applied to the President of the Royal Society as one of the curators of the British Museum for his permission to open one of the three small mummies in the Museum similar to the last two belonging to Dr. Lettsome and Garthshore. He was not only allowed to open one of the three small mummies, but also to choose one of the four large ones for examination. On the 18th February 1792 the

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91. 'An Essay towards.....W. Leithieulleur'.

92. Blumenbach, Op.cit.

investigation began. He also examined an already opened mummy belonging to John Symmons. His findings were that the small Sloanian and Symmons' are not genuine and that Dr. Garthshore's, Dr. Lettsome's and Sir W. Hamilton's (the large one) are most probably spurious<sup>(93)</sup>. From Germany, in 1794 he sent to the Royal Society a very learned dissertation entitled 'Observations on some Egyptian Mummies opened in London', which was published in Phil. Trans. 1794, Part II<sup>(94)</sup>. We will pass the minor points in his paper and deal with his conclusions. Professor Blumenbach devised a method for assigning with some approximation the period in which the mummy was embalmed. His 'Pia Desideria', as he called them, were condensed into two points<sup>(95)</sup>.

a. 'A more accurate determination of the various, so strikingly different, and yet as strikingly characteristic national configuration in the monuments of the period in which these monuments were produced, and the causes of their remarkable differences'.

b. 'A very careful technical examination of the characteristic forms of the several skulls of mummies..., together with an accurate comparison of those skulls with the monuments above mentioned'. He, however, did not illustrate the

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93. Ibid.

94. P.P. 177-195.

95. Ibid & Pettigrew, Egyptian Mummies P.49 et seq. & G.M.Vol. 64 (1794). P.P.1120-21.



application of his theory.

His theory on the racial origin of the Egyptians was based on the study of the skulls of mummies. After his experiments in this field, Professor Blumenbach came to the conclusion that there are at least three principal types in the natural physiognomy of the Ancient Egyptians: 1 - the Ethiopian cast, 2 - the one approaching to the Hindoo, 3 - the mixed, partaking, in a manner of both the former. The first, he says, is chiefly distinguished by the prominent maxillae, turgid lips, broad flat nose, and protuding eyeballs, such as Volney finds in modern Copts; such, according to his conception and the best figures by Norden, is the countenance of the Sphinx; such were, according to the well-known passage of Herodotus on the origin of the Colchians, even the Egyptians of this time, and thus hath Lucian likewise represented a young Egyptian at Rome.

The second, or Hindoo cast, is characterised by a long slender nose, long and thin eyelids, which run upwards from the top of the nose towards the temples, ears placed high on the head, a short and very thin bodily structure, and very long shanks. As an ideal of this form Professor Blumenbach adduced the painted female figure upon the book of the sarcophagus of Col. W. Leithiellieur's mummy in the British Museum, and which, he thought, most strikingly agrees with the unequivocal national form of the Hindoos, which is so often to be seen in Indian paintings.

The third sort of Egyptian configuration, he states, is not similar to either of the preceding ones, but seems to partake something of both, which must have been owing to the modifications produced by local circumstances in a foreign climate. This is characterized by a peculiar turgid habit, flabby cheeks, a short chin, large prominent eyes, and a certain plumpness of person. This is the structure most frequently to be met with.

A fifth kind of research on mummies was made in England in the second half of the 18th century, by John Hadley (1731-64), Professor of Chemistry at Cambridge, M.D., F.R.S. Professor Hadley worked on the mummy, in the museum of the Royal Society, inaccurately described by Nehemiah Grew in his 'Museum Regalis Societatis', London 1681<sup>(96)</sup>. On the 16th December 1763, Hadley was allowed to open the mummy in the presence of some members of the Royal Society, and he communicated to the Society a report entitled 'An account of a mummy, inspected at London, 1763, in a letter to William Heberden.....1 plate', and published in Phil. Trans., London 1765, Vol.54<sup>(97)</sup>. The main object of the enquiry was to analyse the substance used for embalming by ancient Egyptians. This kind of inquiry was not new to England

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96. P.1. et seq.

97. P.P.1-14.



or to Europe. I have not seen the original copy of a lecture given at Cambridge by Dr. W. Heberden on the methods of embalming among the Egyptians, but Osmond Beauvoir communicated it in 1744 to Cox Macro (B.M.Add.MSS.33,557, F.78 et seq.). The conclusion of Dr. Heberden's research was that the substance used in embalming is 'simple asphaltum'. Professor Hadley, however, stated in his conclusion that the substance of embalming 'in all probability....was not a simple substance, but might be a mixture of resinous productions of the Country, with the pitch of that tree which they had in greatest plenty' (98)

As we have seen, the period 1730-1798 is noted for the special attention paid to the study of Egyptian mummies, as well as for the scattered incursions into ancient Egyptian studies, mostly carried on in the spirit of pleasant venturesome amateurism. The Gentlemen's Magazine (99) stated that very few people 'examine Egyptian antiquities'. It was the period when Lord Charlemont headed the 'amateurs', and dashed into Egypt for antiquities, after the Grand Tour, and when Lord Sandwich, a president of the Egyptian Society, with Lord Lovel

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98. Ibid.

99. Vol.60. P.973.

and the Earl of Montagu as members, could be seen chatting together over a dinner in Chandos Street. The 17th century was particularly devoted to the study of the Pyramids, the 18th century witnessed the widening of ancient Egyptian studies to include Upper Egypt, hieroglyphics and mummies. Indeed it was the period of Warburton and Stukeley, but it was distinguished by its lack of profound study of Egyptian antiquities. The clearest illustration of this is the fact that in England, many spurious mummies had been accepted as genuine by eminent antiquaries. Professor Blumenbach stated after his investigation on mummies in London 1792 'How many other artificial restorations and deceptions may have been practiced in the several mummies which have been brought into Europe, which have never been suspected and may perhaps never be detected, may well be admitted, when we consider how imperfect we are as yet in our knowledge of this branch of Egyptian archaeology...', (100)

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100. Op.cit.



### CHAPTER III

#### British conceptions of Arab life and Arabic literature.

'The East must be better known  
than it is to be sufficiently  
liked or disliked'  
Beckford 1778.

The rise of Orientalism in England in the 17th century, which came as a result of British contact with the East since the previous century, and which changed the part of Arabic studies from a medium between the West and ancient Greek learning into intrinsic valuable literature, was seriously handicapped. The Turks stood as barrier between the West and the Arab world. The only British contact with the Islamic world, hitherto, was either in India or in small Islamic states along the Sea Route. Between the 16th and 18th centuries, neither England nor any European country forced its way into the Arab world which was in its turn absolutely ignorant of the scientific development of the West. English public opinion, then, drew its knowledge of this world through travellers, merchants and all sorts of adventurers. It was not even from Arabs that the English learnt Arabic, but rather from the Jews of Spain or Sicily or the Syrian monks, themselves living on the fringe of the Arab world. It was not in the Near East but in India that British Orientalism witnessed its growth and development, through the efforts of the East India Company, W. Jones and the Bengal Asiatic Society. During the 18th century, the Near East saw third class amateur orientalist such as

Russell, Browne, Montague and Bruce, who even failed to convey either an adequate or accurate portrait of the Arab world and whose contribution was in bringing to England different Arabic manuscripts.

Furthermore, the 18th century narrow and rigid English Augustan taste was more than unsympathetic with a literature different from its own in ideals - leave alone one which is essentially emotive and lyrical. Nationalistic classicism, moralistic, philosophic and satiric <sup>moods</sup> ~~moods~~, the insularity of the English people, the alien and exotic characteristics of Arabic literature, all these were bound to add to the unfavourable acceptance of Arabic literature in England. The dominant patterns of Western thought were, moreover, so different from the Arab world. 'East and West were never less likely to meet and embrace than at the beginning of the 18th century'.<sup>(1)</sup> Neither did, apparently, the increasing prevalence of deism and agnosticism prevent Sale and the rest of the 'apologists' from being criticised for their attempted defence of Islam. The period between Edward Pococke and the beginning of modern scientific orientalism with the appearance of Lane's translation of the Arabian Nights 1839, was characterized neither by an accurate conception of Arabic literature among the educated public, nor by the existence of any noteworthy tradition of Arabic learning in academic circles. The

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(1) E.A. Barker, The history of the English Novel, V 55-6.



outstanding illustration of these facts is that the period saw the rise to a pre-eminent position, in English eyes, of the 'Thousand and One Nights', a work which is considered of little merit by Arabic scholars. It is not here that a detailed study of the Nights should be expected. Our concern, however, is to trace the influence of the Nights on English conception of Arabic life and literature.

The Nights were first introduced to the West between 1704-17 by Antoine Galland (1648-1715), a genuine scholar, and, for his time an able Orientalist. His work is not an accurate picture of Arabic life, in spite of his claim that it is so. Lane criticized him for 'sacrificing' in a great measure, 'what is most valuable in original work... the accuracy in respect to those peculiarities which distinguish the Arabs from every other nation, not only of the West, but also of the East'.<sup>(2)</sup> But it does not appear from his method, his deliberate omissions and misrepresentation of some parts, that Galland meant his translation to be an accurate picture of the original. Galland was a born story-teller and he was undoubtedly able to show his abilities in this respect by adapting the Nights not only to the French but also the Western taste of his time. No wonder the resulting picture is a fantasy with elements of Arab world, elements of French

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2. The Thousand and One Nights (1839-41), Preface Vol.I.  
P.VIII.

society in the Grand Siècle, and elements of the mediaeval fairy story in 'la Perron' <sup>(3)</sup>

Apart from the linguistic errors <sup>(4)</sup>, Galland's main changes were omissions of detailed description and what he considered 'indecencies' in the Nights, which show that he was self-conscious and narrow minded. But in spite of his omissions, Galland could be read and appreciated due to his oriental knowledge and good grasp of Islamic life particularly the Turkish. In fact it was his English translators who suffered more than his version, both through his omissions and adumbrations.

The Nights were translated into English almost immediately. The identity of the translator or the translators are not known, but usually referred to as Bell's, the publisher <sup>(5)</sup>

It is this translation that interests us here as it was the most popular one during the 18th and a part of the 19th centuries. Comparing this English translation with Galland's, P. Russell <sup>(6)</sup> calls it 'wretched'. Because of its colloquialism due to the fact that the translator was one

3. M. Manzallawi, Some English Translations of Arabic Imaginative Literature (1704-1838). Thesis submitted for the degree of B.Litt. Magdalen College, Oxford.
4. A typical mistake in Galland was the translation of قُوَّةُ الْقُلُوبِ as 'Force de coeurs.' (قُوَّةُ الْقُلُوبِ)
5. The earliest reference to the English version is a notice in the Catalogue for 1708 (Term Catalogues 1668-1709 ed. E. Arber 1906 III P.592).
6. Manzallawi, P.36.



of the minor writers of Augustan England, Burton (7) considered it as 'below criticism'. But Burton apparently disregarded the fact that it was this translation, best known to the English reading public of the 18th century, from which they acquired their conception of the Arab world. Unlike Galland who never forgot that the 'Nights' are primarily folk tales, translators and educated public in England took them as typical illustrations of Arabic life and Arab people. The Nights are illustrative in some parts of Arabic life - particularly the mediaeval and Egyptian - but they certainly incorporate pictures of Persian, Indian as well as Turkish life, manners and customs. But Bell's greatest handicap was his ignorance of Arabic life and inadequate oriental knowledge. He refers to the 'Porte' (8) as 'Sea Port' and hieroglyphics as ancient Arabic script (9). He misunderstood the use of the veil worn by Moslem women as much as Arabic customs in dining room and bedchamber (10). It must be remembered that before Jonathan Scott's direct translation from Arabic in 1811, there was not in England any accurate idea of the manners and customs of Arabs and Arabic life. Bell's ignorance of Arabic life made him frequently depart from the French version. The result was that his was a true picture of neither the original 'Nights' nor even of Galland.

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7. Ibid.

8. Manzallawi, P.48.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

With scholarship in this state of uncertainty, it is not unexpected that popular notions of the East should be vague. The ordinary reader's imagined idea of the Arab world can be judged from the illustrations made by contemporary artists for late 18th century impressions of the 'Nights'. The pictures show a strange mixture of genuinely oriental traits, pseudo-oriental attempts, European details of dress and furnishing, and the usual classical touches incorporated in the formalised art of the time.

Amidst that low standard of erudition and uncertain scholarship, the period saw serious attempts for the study of Orientalism and growing sympathy towards Islam and Islamic writers. In the field of history Ockley laid some foundation for a wider understanding of the history of Moslem conquests. The chapters in Gibbon dealing with Mohammed himself and with the growth of the Moslem Empire, though presented from a sceptical point of view, had the advantage of placing the history of Islam in its proper perspective in relation to world events. Sale, Reland, and other 'apologists' for Islam, showed resentment to violent prejudices against the character of Mohammed and the interpretation of his life in legendary terms. The labours of White and Paley in the theological field do not show the acrimony of earlier theologians. Without discussing every branch of these studies, it might be adequate, to take the field of literature as illustrative of this trend in the scholarly circles.



In the early 17th century, Arabic studies began to be pursued in the British Universities. In 1632 Thomas Adams founded the first Chair of Arabic in Cambridge, while Archbishop Laud patronised the rival chair at Oxford in 1631. The leading Arabist of the 17th century was the first occupier of Laud's professorship, Edward Pococke who spent five years in the Near East during which he mastered both spoken and written Arabic, and acquired a fine collection of Arabic manuscripts which he took back with him to Oxford. Both Cambridge and Oxford received eminent Arabists who contributed considerably to the study of contemporary Arabic literature. Humphrey Prideaux is distinguished for his biography of the Prophet, Leonard Chappellow with his admirable translation of a first rate piece of Arabic literature "The Assemblies of Harriri", Carlyle with his 'Specimens of Arabic Poetry, from the Earliest Time to the Extinction of the Khalifat' and W. Jones with his 'Mollakats' a notoriously difficult work which tested his Arabic scholarship to the full<sup>(11)</sup>.

In 1724 another professorship, Lord Almoner, was added to both Oxford and Cambridge. The Almoner professor of Arabic was appointed, while both the Laudian and Adam's were elected by a committee of the University. The Almoner had to teach in the absence of the Laudian or Adam. But it happened more often than not that the Laudian or Adam's

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11. See following page.

11. The Sir Thomas Adams Professor of Arabic in the second half of the 18th century

Elected.

- 1720 Leonard Chappelow, M.A., Fellow of St. John's. B.D. 1723. Lord Almoner's Reader in Arabic, 1729.
- 1768 Samuel Halifax. L.L.D., Fellow of Trinity Hall. Lord Almoner's Reader in Arabic 1768.
- 1770 William Craven, B.D., Fellow of St. John's. Lord Almoner's Reader in Arabic, 1770. Master of St. John's 1789. D.D. 1789.
- 1795 Joseph Cacre Carlyle, B.D. Fellow of Queens.
- 1804 Joseph Palmer, B.D., Fellow of St. John's.

(See Cambridge Hist. Reg. P. 82)

Laudian Professors of Arabic in the second half of the 18th century.

- 1738 Thomas Hunt, M.A. Hart Hall; Fellow of Hertford; afterwards Lord Almoner's Professor of Arabic, D.D., and Requis Professor of Hebrew.
- 1774 Joseph White, M.A., Fellow of Wadham; D.D., afterwards Requis Professor of Hebrew.

(See Oxford Hist. Reg. P. 59)

Almoner's Professors of Arabic in Oxford in the second half of 18th century

(names given of those who held this chair only)

- 1748 Richard Browne, B.D., Fellow of Trinity; D.D., afterwards Requis Professor of Hebrew.
- 1780 Henry Ford, B.A., Ch. Ch., afterwards Principal of Magdalen Hall, D.C.L.

(See Oxford Hist. Reg. P. 62)

British Arabists (not professors in Cambridge or Oxford)

- (1762-1783) D. Price
- (1775-1811) J. Leydon.
- (1754-1829) J. Scott.
- H. Hindley.
- P. Russel
- (1784-1817) J. L. Burchardt.



professor held the Almoner professorship as well, a practice more common in Cambridge than in Oxford.

The professorship in Arabic, in fact the study of Oriental literature in general, though it might bring scholars reputation, did not provide a sufficient means of livelihood. Chiefly because of this W. Jones turned his thoughts in 1774 to a legal career<sup>(12)</sup>. The Thomas Adams professor of Arabic was paid £40 per annum<sup>(13)</sup> while the annual stipend of Almoner was £50 in Cambridge<sup>(14)</sup> and £25 in Oxford, subsequently raised to £50 in 1770<sup>(15)</sup>. There is very little we know about the learning and teaching of contemporary Arabic inside the Universities. Both Cambridge and Oxford Historical Registers point to the non-existence of lectureships or teacherships in Arabic, the non-existence of Arabic scholars among the official staff, although there were some unofficial, and no degree in Arabic or any Oriental language. All these came to the Universities in the development of British Orientalism in the late 19th century.

Sir William Jones is a typical illustration of this trend, not only in Islamic studies but in the wider field of

12. Dictionary of National Biography under Sir William Jones.

13. Cambridge History Register P.81.

14. Ibid, P.89.

15. The 'Triple Assessment' of W.Pitt 1798, *exempted*, those whose income was under £60 (Seligman, The Income Tax P.P. 65-66)

Orientalism. The tutor of Lord Althorp was able to establish his reputation as an Oriental scholar by his 'Grammar of Persian Language' in 1770. Although he was involved in politics between 1773 and 1780 and it appears from his printed address in the Bodleian Library in May 1780 that he was an unsuccessful candidate for the Lord Almoner's professorship of Arabic at Oxford, Jones again confirmed his scholarship in 1781 by his admirable translation of the Mollakat.

Professor Arberry deals with aspects of Jones' life both in his 'Asiatic Jones' and 'British Orientalists'. Here we are only concerned with his influence on British contemporary Orientalism. Jones was one of the heads of Orientalists who tried to break from the prevailing conception of Oriental literature and established a tradition among the educated public in England. In 1770 he addressed his appeal to the 'Princes de l'Europe', asking them to encourage the study of Asiatic languages. In his preface to the 'Grammar of Persian language' he attacked that prevailing conception by saying, 'Some men have never heard of the Asiatic writings; and others will not be convinced that there is anything valuable in them, we all love to excuse or to conceal our ignorance, and are seldom willing to allow any beyond the limits of our own attainments, like the savages, who thought that the sun rose and set for them alone, and could not imagine that the waves, which surrounded their island, left coral and pearls upon any other shore'.<sup>(16)</sup> His



translations were read by many literary men of the 19th century, and his influence is evident in the most famous poets of the period. Southey and Moore often quoted Jones' works in their copious notes<sup>(17)</sup> That Shelley and Tennyson borrowed from him in their 'Queen Mob' and 'Jackshy Hell' has lately been proved by Professor E. Koepfel<sup>(18)</sup> Byron also seems to have read some of his works. In an unpublished poem, 'The Barmaid', Byron parodies a poem by Hafiz that Jones had translated<sup>(19)</sup> 'Recent Histories of Literature', writes Professor R.M. Hewitt in an essay published in 1942, 'though they still find room for James Macpherson, omit even the name of Sir William Jones, whose influence on poetry and public opinion and general culture had been both more extensive and more permanent. It is not an exaggeration to say that he altered our whole conception of the Eastern world....If we were compiling a thesis on the influence of Jones we could collect most of our material from footnotes, ranging from Gibbon to Tennyson.....'<sup>(20)</sup>

Beside these trends of pleasurable amateurism and serious revaluation of Arabic <sup>culture</sup> ~~writers~~, there was a third apparent trend for assimilating it in the English Augustan background which was classical in taste and Christian in values. One feature of this trend was the use of Arabic

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17. M.E. de Muster, Oriental influences in the English literature of the 19th century, Heidelberg, 1915, p.6.
  18. E.Shelley 'Queen Mob and Sir W.Jones' Palace of Fortune: English Studies P.43.
  19. de Muster P.34, also P.P.22-58.
  20. R.M.Hewitt, Harmonious Jones (Essays and studies by Members of the English Association Vol.XXV, III, 1942).

scholarship to illustrate the Bible and to serve the Church. The Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Cambridge University, in a letter of thanks to the founder of the chair of Arabic referred to the maintenance of a professor of Arabic in the University as tending 'not only to the advancement of good literature by bringing to light much knowledge which as yet <sup>learned</sup> ~~lo~~ckett up in that ~~barred~~ tongue; but also to the good service of the King and State in our commerce with these Eastern nations, and in Gods good time to the enlarging of the borders of the Church, and <sup>propagation</sup> ~~propagation~~ of Christian religion to them who now sitt in darknesse', (21) The languages and literature of the Near East remained important to the missionary purposes of the Church of England and for their value in Biblical studies. Porteous, Bishop of London 'often and seriously lamented, that Oriental literature was not sufficiently cultivated by those who were destined for the ministerial office in the Church' and with this in mind, appointed to an English living, a German who had lived in the East (22) The preface to 'Oriental Collections' (1797-1800) edited by Sir W. Ousely, points out the usefulness of Arabic for theological and Biblical studies, and states that the periodical will deal with 'Hebrew Biblical matters without indulging in theological controversy'. It must be remembered that a great deal of the work of the British Orientalist George Sale was carried out at the request of the 'Society for the promotion

21. Camb. Hist. Reg. P.P. 938-9.

22. V. ~~P. 100~~ The Sexagenarian (1817) P.P. 431-4.



of Christian knowledge'.

A second feature of this assimilation was the service which Oriental studies and culture could render to British administration in the East, most particularly in Bengal. In the second half of the 18th century, alive to the desirability of sending out its employees at least partly qualified in the languages and culture of the people among whom they were to work, the East India Company, thanks to the Marquis of Wellesly, founded the 'College of Fort William'. Arabic and Persian were among the subjects prescribed, for which professorships were established. Another college on the same lines (now known as Haileybury) was founded by the Company in Hertford<sup>(23)</sup>. Seeking an appointment in the Company's service in India with the primary aim of pursuing their Oriental studies in more advantageous circumstances, was quite a common practice among British Orientalists of this period. Out of the whole number of British Orientalists, cited by Arberry, who visited India during this period, only W. Cerey (1761-1834) and J. Marsham (1768-1837) were missionaries, the rest were enrolled in the service of the Company. Sir William Jones again stands as the leader of this trend. With the requirements of the administration of Bengal in mind, he published the 'Bughyat al-bahith of Ibn al-Mulaggin', a verified treatise in Arabic on the Shafiite law of inheritance, with an English translation.

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23. Arberry, British Orientalists, P.P.16-17.

The remarks in the preface that 'It appears indubitable, that a knowledge of Mohamedan jurisprudence (I say nothing of the Hindu learning), and consequently of the languages used by Mohamedan writers, are essential to a complete administration of justice in our Asiatic Territories'. But undoubtedly, the greatest factor in establishing British administration in Bengal <sup>on</sup> a more pro-scientific basis, and ultimately introducing other Oriental studies to British scholars, was the foundation in 1784 of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Royal later). In September 1783, Sir William Jones, arrived in India to be a judge of the Supreme Court at Fort William, and with a number of other British residents, notably Charles Wilkins, founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal for the purpose of conducting an 'enquiry into the history and antiquities, arts, sciences and literature of Asia'. The step in itself is of capital importance, for here are to be found the first stages of a scientific movement in this field which was destined to spread to all parts of the world. The foundation of the Society was followed by anniversary discourses to the society by Sir William as president. The address in 1797 was entitled 'On Arabs'. In March 1788, he presented a long memorandum to Lord Cornwallis the plan for what were to have been his most arduous and ambitious undertaking 'the compilation of a complete digest of Hindu and Mohamedan Laws....., compiled by most learned of the native languages, with an accurate verbal translation of it into



English<sup>(24)</sup> fully persuaded that Jones' proposal would both serve the best interests of India and the credit of the British administration, the Governor-General made the necessary provisions for the undertaking. Jones, however, did not live to see its completion which was left to Henry Colebrooke.

A third feature of this assimilation concerns the 'Nights'. We have already referred to the unfavourable reception of the 'Nights' by the colourless Augustan England. Bishop F. Attenbury's<sup>(25)</sup> verdict on them is significant, as it shows the 'old school' hostile attitude. To him these tales were 'so extravagant, monstrous and disproportioned' that they 'gave a judicious eye pain'. Again the Rev. J. Cooper's attitude and treatment, or rather maltreatment, of Oriental fiction was expressed in the 'Oriental Moralist' of about the year 1790. Here the 'Beauties of the Arabian Nights Entertainment' were accompanied by 'suitable reflections adapted to each story', thus further revealing the general outlook of the 'Age of Reason', and the injustice done to Oriental fiction by this prejudice and lack of sympathy. In the preface, having compared the collection to a neglected garden, full of weeds and delightful flowers, Cooper says 'I have endeavoured to a few of the most

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24. Arberry, Asiatic Jones, P.25.

25. Bishop of Rochester and a friend of Pope. Conant, M. The ~~opinion of 22nd~~ *Oriental Tale in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century*. New York, 1908. P. 230.

interesting tales, have given them a new dress in point of language, and have carefully expurged anything that could give the least offence to the most delicate reader. Not satisfied with these views, I have added many moral reflections, wherever the story would admit of them. I have in many instances, considerably altered the fables, and have given them a turn which appeared to me the most likely to promote the love of virtue, to fortify the youthful heart against the passions of vice, and to point out to them the paths which lead to peace, happiness, and honour'. This was typical of the spirit and method of these classical chauvinists to Oriental fiction, - a great departure from the original, a distortion of facts, and a complete marring of all the genuine beauties of the richly imaginative tales. Not only did they fail to present a true picture of the 'Nights' but with their lack of adequate Oriental knowledge they entirely misrepresented Arabic life and thought.

With a complete disregard ~~to~~ their intrinsic literary merits, the 'Nights' were looked upon by the majority of authentic writers of this period as a novel curiosity or a trifling entertainment that could be accepted in 'polite society' only to point a moral or teach a lesson. Soon a didactic tradition respecting the use of Oriental material evolved and this resulted in a very unhappy marriage of the 'romantic' Oriental tales with the Classical spirit of reason, edification and satire. To the periodical essays of



the Spectator, the Guardian, the Rambler and the Adventurer, the function of the tales was merely to inculcate morality and illustrate right living by examples. Thus, the imaginative Oriental tale was turned into a story 'with a purpose', meant chiefly for instruction and not for 'idle entertainment'. Shortly after, the panic of utilizing Oriental fiction for moralistic purposes became so fashionable that other didactic zealots and moralists eagerly seized upon the Oriental tale as a disguise for satirical, moral or philosophical reflections. <sup>Hence</sup> ~~Moreover~~, the 'Nights' played in England the part played by the Fairy Tale in France. Miss Conant<sup>(26)</sup> in her treatise on Oriental tales in the 18th century, cites a great number of these philosophical, satirical, moralistic adaptations of the Nights, which makes it unnecessary to deal further with them here.

Beneath these formal, critical and prosaic characteristics of the 18th century literature, the first of a 'reactionary' romantic spirit was growing. Professor Phelps<sup>(27)</sup> states that 'the beginnings of the English Romantic movement should date back to the first quarter of the eighteenth century; and during the second quarter, and especially during the fifth decade, the strength of the movement was much greater than seems to have been commonly

26. Conant, Martha F., The Oriental Tale in England in the 18th century. New York, 1908.

27. Phelps, W.L. The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement (Roston, 1893) P.6.

supposed'. Although French influence on contemporary literary canons had played not an insignificant part, the chief reason for the growing popularity of the Nights is in the fact that they possessed an essentially romantic character. Despite their artistic defects, the Nights claim a first place among the imaginative standard works of the world. The significance of the part played by Oriental fiction in the Romantic Movement can best be shown by quoting out the general traits it has in common with 'Gothic' literature with regard to the implications of the term 'Romantic'. In the Oriental we find the reactionary desire to escape to far away, mysterious East, the 'remote in space'. In the other there is the retrogressive desire to return to the 'Middle Ages', that is to say the 'remote in time'. But the influence of the remoteness and mystery of the East on the Romantic Movement seems to have been overstressed by modern critics. It was not China or Japan where the Romantics found their 'themes' or 'Background', but in the Near East which, though still mysterious, has its place in their traditional legacy. A second trait common to both the 'Nights' and 'Gothic' literature, is their expression of a longing for picturesque glowing magical atmosphere and strangeness, added sometimes to Beauty, sometimes to 'Honour'. Bearing in mind the well-known fact that 'Romanticism' is wider in connotation than 'Mediaevalism', the 'Nights' delineates just another romantic



aspect of those interesting Middle Ages, only Arabic instead of Gothic. Such an argument is substantiated by the fact that the religious, military and social life of Arabian society in this historical epoch, together with all forms of its art, are described by the word 'picturesque'.

Professor Phelps in his exhaustive study of the beginnings of the English Romantic Movement concludes that the three main characteristics common to all Romantic literature are - Subjectivity; Love of Picturesque; and Reacting Spirit. An examination of the *Nights* would bring vividly their most significant characteristics, i.e. love of adventure and of mystery, the feelings of surprise, Horror or Delight and the Naive extravagance joy mixed with the Unusual and Exotic.

A study of the romantic poets of the early 19th century and the influence of the '*Nights*' on their works does not lie within the scope of this work. But a study of '*Vathek*' by Beckford is necessary first because it bears the marks of the most typical characteristic of the period; the swing over from Classicism to Romanticism.

'*Vathek*' was Abu Djafar Haroun Al-Wathik *Billah* the ninth Abbasid Caliph. In general outline, the life and character of the Caliph Vathek, as depicted by Beckford, followed faithfully the original facts concerning the life and times of the historical figure. Yet, in a work of fiction occasional departure from historical fact for

dramatic effect or for some other artistic reason, is obviously inevitable. Magic, astronomy, and *fire-working*, luxury and magnificence, homosexuality and indulgence in sensual pleasures, scientific research and intolerant heterodoxy, religious dissension and political unrest were all characteristic features of the reign of the Caliph Al-Wathik Billah. But the most striking point about Beckford's work is the extent to which he adopted everything regarding the Caliph's character and surroundings, so as to make of the whole a reflection of his own violent personality and his colourful conception of Oriental life and outlook.

'If you would form a tolerable judgement upon it (the East)' he said, 'not a single relation, not one voyage or volume of travels must be neglected.'<sup>(28)</sup> Beckford followed an extensive course of Oriental studies. But of all the Oriental material he read, the *Nights* held a dominant position. One of his biographers<sup>(29)</sup> maintains that the effect of the '*Nights*' on Beckford's life and character is greater perhaps than that of any other work of art. They fed his romantic spirit, held his wild imagination captive and finally, when he was ready to write his romantic work, they supplied him with themes, details, and suggestions concerning

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28. L. Melville, *The life and letters of William Beckford* 1910. Letter to his sister (Mrs. Harvey) April 1778.

29. *Ibid.* P.20.



Eastern life. Not only did they inspire him with the idea of *Vathek*, but their powerful influence is traceable throughout all his Oriental compositions, such as 'The Vision' and the 'Episode of *Vathek*'.

The two most striking features about Beckford's conception of Orientalism are Indian magic and sensuous pleasures, both strongly reflected in his private life. In composing '*Vathek*', Beckford drew from Galland's *Arabian Nights*. He also made good use of d'Herbelots *Bibliothèque Orientale*, Scott's *Arabian Tales*, Savary and Ousley's *Oriental Collections*. Hence it was remarked that *Vathek* is no unique performance, but an epitome of most of the leading characteristics of the Oriental tale, as already developed in the East and copied or modified in Europe. But of all other works to which Beckford is deeply indebted none are so important as *Mogul Tales* and Bignon's *The Adventures of Abdulla, Son of Hanif*.

The value of *Vathek* is a controversial problem. There is no doubt, however, that it possesses all the virtues and faults of the period. While Voltaire's mockery and Dr. Johnson's moralization are scattered everywhere, '*Vathek*', like the '*Nights*' is fantastic in plot and brilliant in colouring. It is infused with two of the most significant characteristics of the Romantic movement: a spirit of unrest, and picturesqueness. The book acts as a link between its predecessors and successors.

Professor Gibb<sup>(30)</sup> aptly describes the influence of 'Vathek'. First by its fusion of Gothic romance with Oriental subjects and imagery, 'Vathek' prefigured and influenced much of the imaginative work of the next fifty years. More important, was its indirect influence, 'its share in predisposing public taste for the reversion to the non-classical and mediaeval which goes by the name of the Romantic movement'. Southey, Barry, Coleridge, and most particularly Byron<sup>(31)</sup> were not only impressed by 'Vathek' but borrowed directly from it for their romantic verse-tales. It was due, however, to these poets of the early 19th century that 'Vathek' began to take its proper place in the story of English literature.

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30. The Legacy of Islam (Oxford 1931), p.201.

31. For details on Vathek's influence on 19th century romantic poets, see Ch.V in 'A study of Warburton's 'The Crescent and the Cross' in relation to the Literary Interest in the Near East shown by English Romantic Writers in the 18th and the earlier 19th centuries' by M.S.Abdel Hamid. Thesis presented to Bristol University.



## CHAPTER IV.

British travellers impressions of Egypt.

As far as British travellers in Egypt in the first half of the 18th century are concerned, one might assert on the whole that their main interest was antiquity and antiquarian researches carried out in a spirit of dilettantism. The latter part of the 18th century, however, gave rise to a very different type of British traveller to Egypt. It would be unwise to concur with some authorities on travel literature and relate British travels in Egypt during this period to different aspects of British travels in general<sup>(1)</sup>. One searches in vain for any clear and definite connection between British travels in Egypt and British commercial expansion during the century. For while British trade with India increased five-fold and doubled with Africa, trade with Egypt, in fact the whole trade of the Levant Company, was diminishing throughout the century.

Two main factors that came into being with the arrival of James Bruce<sup>(2)</sup> in Egypt in 1768 were in the main responsible for subsequent British travels, namely the opening of the overland route between England and India through Egypt and the tentative explorations into what was then known as the 'interior of Africa'. Bruce worked in both fields, but those who followed him can be distinctly classified into two groups; first

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1. M.S. Abdel Hamid, op.cit. ch.VI.P.2.
  2. Travels to discover the Source of the Nile in the years 1768,69,70,71,72 and 73 containing a Journey through Egypt, the three Arabias and Ethiopia. 5 Vol. Edinburgh 1790.

the servants of the East India Company, the merchants and ordinary passengers who used this overland route, and secondly the African explorers who made Egypt their starting point for discoveries. Both kinds of undertaking, though carried through by what might well be called 'chance travellers', nevertheless appear to have re-established the geographical significance of Egypt, not only in respect to Africa but also to the links of communication between the East and the West.

To the first group belong E. Irwin<sup>(3)</sup>, who was in Egypt in 1777, H. Rooke (1777)<sup>(4)</sup>, James Capper (1779)<sup>(5)</sup>, Mrs. E. Fay (1778)<sup>(6)</sup>, A. Parsons (1778)<sup>(7)</sup> and M. Cleghorn (1795)<sup>(8)</sup>. The chief figures among these passengers who made a detailed description of that route and the Islamic 'schells' in the Red Sea and were representatives of the British India approach to the Red Sea are Irwin, Rooke and Capper. The Route usually taken by them was by sea between Alexandria and Rosetta, by the Nile between Rosetta and Cairo and in the company of trade caravan between Suez and Cairo, Irwin was the only one who was forced to land at Cosseir and travel through the Eastern Desert to Kena and thence by the Nile to Cairo. As such this group of travellers is characterized by being constantly in contact

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3. A Series of adventures in the course of a voyage up the Red Sea, on the coasts of Arabia and Egypt, and of a route through the Deserts of Thebais, hitherto unknown to European travellers,.....etc. London, 1781.
  4. Travels to the Coast of Arabia Felix, and from thence, by the Red Sea and Egypt, to Europe; containing a short account of an expedition undertaken against the Cape of Good Hope. London 1783.
  5. Observations on the passage to India through Egypt...etc. London 1783.
  6. Letters from India, London, 1925.
  7. Travels in Asia and Africa..etc, London, 1808.
  8. Cleghorn Papers. London.



with the Bedouins and life in the Egyptian deserts and their accounts are significant in the study of the 18th century Egyptian caravan routes.

By their commercial penetration into the Mediterranean and round the Cape of Good Hope, the British in the 18th century became fairly acquainted with the Northern, Western and, to a less degree, Eastern coasts of Africa. Apart from this, the interior parts of the continent remained 'terra incognita'. One might safely assume that their acquaintance with Egypt, from a geographical point of view, surpassed their knowledge of any other part of the Continent. It is not therefore inexplicable, as the Edinburgh Review held<sup>(9)</sup>, that an African traveller; G.W.Browne, should call his book 'Travels in Africa, Egypt and Syria'. Because of that knowledge of Egypt, and because of its intrinsic geographical position, Egypt became the natural gateway to British discoveries in Africa in the second half of the century. There were two lines pursued, one along the Nile, pointing South-West to the old land of the 'Queen of Sheba', the other South-East to the sources of the Gambia to link with their tentative explorations there from early in the 17th century.

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(9) Vol. II. p. 115.

Up to the days of R. Pococke, British travellers in Egypt had proceeded no further than the first cataract. Pococke's book, however, foreshadowed the interest of the English nobility in these explorations. For late in 1758, Lord Halifax, then president of the Board of Trade, discussed with James Bruce the question of the sources of the Nile and proposed that Bruce should interest himself in it. In this connection he secured for Bruce the consulship of Algiers as the proper post to learn Arabic and acquire information concerning the interior of Africa. In the summer of 1768, Bruce was at Alexandria ready to start his travels in Egypt, the Red Sea, Abyssinia, to return along the course of the Nile, an expedition which occupied him for nearly four years (1769-1773). It is not here that one should introduce a discussion on Bruce's discoveries. It should be noted, however, that Bruce was mistaken in thinking that he had reached the source of the true Nile. Again, he was less excusably mistaken in regarding himself as the first European who had reached these springs. Pedro Paez, the Jesuit, had undoubtedly reached them as early as 1615. Bruce's travels, however, together with those of Dr. Sparman, Patterson and Colond Gordon in South Africa, aroused considerable curiosity coupled with a 'reproach' as to the ignorance of the 'present age' about Africa. 'Sensible of this stigma and desirous of rescuing the age from a charge of ignorance, which in other respects, belongs



very little to its character<sup>(10)</sup>, a group of dilettanti headed by Lord Rawdon (later Marquis of Hastings) founded on the 9th of June 1788 an 'Association for promoting the Discovery of the Interior of Africa'<sup>(11)</sup>. The interior of Africa in 18th century terminology did not signify any equatorial region, but was restricted rather to the sources of the Senegal, Niger and Gambia rivers, the western central region of what is now known as French West Africa.

It might be argued, then, that North Africa would offer a more natural entrance to these regions than Egypt. Geographically that appears to be true, but the political unrest of the Islamic countries of North Africa caused by the imminent danger the Arab tribes there, which threatened throughout the century the social and economic life of the towns, made the journey a perilous undertaking.

In Egypt, explorers found it convenient to accompany the trade of pilgrim caravans between Cairo and Darfur and beyond. In Cairo they were likely to obtain information about these 'interiors' from Arab merchants, and assistance from the British Consul or Carlo Rosetti, the Venetian merchant and unofficial head of the Frank colony in Cairo. Furthermore, the districts of exploration were inhabited mostly by Moslems, and explorers found it useful to stop in Cairo for

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10. Proceedings of the Association for promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, London, 1790. P.7.

11. Ibid.

a certain period to acquire the language and study the manners and customs of the people.

Up to the turn of the century, the 'African Association' was able to send over two explorers to Egypt. The first was J. Ledyard<sup>(12)</sup> who died prematurely in Cairo in 1788, the second was the German explorer Fredrick Hornemann<sup>(13)</sup> who witnessed the French Expedition to Egypt, and, assisted by Napoleon, made his investigation in Sennar in 1798-1800. Beside these two, Egypt saw W.G. Browne<sup>(14)</sup>, a private explorer who arrived at Alexandria in January 1792 with the intention of penetrating into Abyssinia. Accompanying the great Sudan caravan to Darfur, and encountering great hardships, he reached Darfur in July 1793. There he made his investigations. It was not before 1796 that he arrived back in Cairo.

Apart from the 'chance travellers', there were a few residents either in an official capacity like G. Baldwin or unofficial ones like Antea and Lusignan. S. Lusignan<sup>(15)</sup>, a Levantine merchant, contemporary of Bruce and Wortley Montagu, is specially noted for his account of the history of the revolt of Ali Bey, to which he added, as far as Egypt is concerned, a description of Cairo and an account of the Government

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12. Proceedings of the African Association...etc.P.26.et seq.

Parks, Memoirs of the Life of Ledyard, P.402. et seq.

13. Proceedings...etc 1802. P.2 et seq. Hornemann, F. The Journal of Fredrick Hornemann's travels in 1797-8. London 1802

14. Travels in Africa, Egypt and Syria, from the years 1792 to 1798. London 1799.

15. A History of the Revolt of Ali Bey against the Ottoman Porte, ...etc. London 1783.



of Egypt. The authenticity of his work was impugned by the French traveller, F. Volney<sup>(16)</sup>, who instanced with ridicule the Bey's father's visit to Egypt as an example of how Lusignan was misinformed. The latter seems, however, to have failed to pass an impartial judgement on the revolt. Moreover, he wrote his work ten years after the Bey's death and, depending entirely on his memory for places and names, laid himself open to inaccuracy. John Antes<sup>(17)</sup>, American born, was a Moravian missionary, 'invited to serve the mission at Grand Cairo...'. When he arrived at the beginning of 1770, the original plan<sup>(18)</sup> was that Antes, with his German Brethren, would follow James Bruce to Abyssinia for missionary work there. But 'the information received from Mr. Bruce, upon his return in 1773,.....destroyed all our hopes of being of any service there...'<sup>(19)</sup> Antes stayed in Egypt until the end of 1781, absorbed in an apparently unsuccessful mission among the Copts<sup>(20)</sup>

16. C.F. De Volny, Voyages, en Syrie et en Egypte, pendant les années 1783, 1784 et 1785. Paris 1787. P.

17. Observations on the Manners and Customs of the Egyptians... etc. London 1800.

18. J.A., Missionair der Brudergemeinde. (Eine Selbstbiographie) Basel 1869. P.1 et seq.

19. Confidence in God, illustrated in the life of J.A., a missionary in Egypt; extracted from a narrative written by himself. The first series tracts, etc. (Religious Tract Society) London 1799. P.2.

20. "August 23. I set off on a visit to Behnesse, to renew our connexion and acquaintance with the few Copts in that place,... there I staid about six weeks, and spoke to many Copts of the love of Jesus Christ our Saviour; intreating them to devote themselves to him, by whose name they wishe to be called, and to such approve themselves as believers in, and followers of his doctrines. They appeared to assent to everything that was said; but it was easily seen that, with most of them, though they had a custom of speaking in scripture phrases, or, out of compliment to me, expressed their approbation, their hearts remained untouched which made me daily call upon the Lord to hasten their conversacion". Antes, Confidence in God P.6.

Of all the Englishmen in Egypt in the second half of the 18th century, G. Baldwin enjoyed the longest stay, as an agent of the East India Company (1775-1779) and the British Consul-General in Cairo (1786-1796). Both official positions must have afforded him a unique opportunity of coming into intimate contact with the ruling Beys. Thus he was, most probably, the best-informed Englishman about the contemporary political conditions of the country. Up to 1798, apart from the 'Narrative....to the plunder of the English merchants 1779<sup>(21)</sup>', Baldwin wrote practically nothing of significance on Egypt. Even the substance of his well-known work 'Political Recollections relative to Egypt' 1801, does not contain much more than his 'Speculation on the situation and resources of Egypt' presented to the British Government sixteen years earlier<sup>(22)</sup>. His 'Political Recollections' was received with bitter disappointment by the British public. 'Not only from the title page' writes the editor of The British Critic, 'but from the local situations and character of the writer, the public might reasonably expect a great deal more than they will find...., and we cannot help being of the opinion that a great number will partake of the disappointment which we confess to have experienced. So much has the curiosity

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21. 'Narrative of facts to the plunder of the English merchants by the Arabs and other subsequent outrages of the Government of Cairo in the course of the year 1779'

22. See Ch.VIII.



of the world been directed to Egypt, that every eye, and every ear, anxiously expected to know what an Englishman who had resided almost thirty years upon the spot was able to tell them'.<sup>(23)</sup> The fact is that this book, which was written in the light of the 18th century British interest in Egypt, was published in the 19th century Egyptian Napoleonic upheaval. In the first place Baldwin offered very little 'new' to the public. In the second place he seems to have been determined to boost in strong terms the services he performed at the expense of information on the subjects he professed to discuss.<sup>(24)</sup>

We shall attempt here to give these travellers' conception of the political and social structure of the country in general terms, avoiding their views on the British political interests in Egypt which will be dealt with in the following chapters.

In general, British travellers were able to understand the nature of the Levantine political and administrative set-up, with its favouritism, its bribery and the nature of the Mameluke mentality in particular. By the end of the century, a French traveller had written that the English enjoyed the

23. *vid. xviii*. p. 89.

24. *Edinburgh Review* Vol. I. P. 59

bona fides of the ruling class in Egypt through their lavishness. Cleghorn, after a few days stay in Cairo, wrote that nothing could be done in this country without presents. There is no doubt that these travellers were aware of the domination of the Beys. Eton, who published his survey of the Ottoman Empire in 1798, described the three main features of the Porte's sovereignty in Egypt by saying '...the Pasha is in effect a prisoner during his government which is only nominal; the Porte draws little or no revenue from it....The Janizaries and Arab soldiers in the service of the Porte....are few in number mostly composed of artizans and persons unaccustomed to arms. The actual power resides in the Mamelukes....'(25) But the fact that Egypt was virtually independent, being only nominally a Turkish province seems to have been difficult for these travellers to grasp. 'I hardly know how to explain....the form of government here', writes H. Rooke, 'it is of so strange and complicated a nature; on one hand the Pasha or Vice-Roy sent by the Grand Signor, to whom the country is tributary, claims the sovereignty, on the other the twenty-four Beys maintain their authority,'(26) Bruce admits that he 'could never understand it, and therefore cannot

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25. W.Eton, A survey of the Turkish Empire 1798 P.293.

26. Op.cit. P.94.



explain it,<sup>(27)</sup> Even the better-informed Baldwin was 'puzzled to define its government<sup>(28)</sup>: who has ever defined it? It is neither dependent nor independent'. In an attempt to assess that political form of government, some of them refer to the 'Beys' as the 'Republic'. Lusignan oversimplified when he divided the administration of Egypt into the 'Republic' and the 'Monarchy'; the first represented by the Beys, the second by the Pasha<sup>(29)</sup>. That misconception had led Capper<sup>(30)</sup> to think that the twenty-four Beys were rulers of provinces and therefore concluded that Egypt was divided into twenty-four provinces, and that the Sheikh El Balad enjoyed 'more or less the power of the Doge of Venice'. Apart from the fact that the word 'Bey' or 'Senjak' did not always signify the governing <sup>of a</sup> province or even any administrative work but often a title carrying financial and social privileges, the Beys unlike the Republic of Venice, did not represent an economic strat<sup>um</sup> in society but rather a military one. Again the travellers seem to ignore the fact that their 'Republic' was not exclusively <sup>the</sup> Mamelukes, the Forte having the right to appoint Beys out of the twenty-four. The keynote

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27. Op.cit. Vol.I.P.26.

28. Political Recollections, P.47.

29. Op.cit.P.

30. Op.cit.18-19.

of this misapprehension apparently lies in the fact that the travellers failed to realize that the standing of the Pashas, that of the Ottoman military leaders and the powers of the Beys which the travellers knew in their time, all this was the development of more than a century during which the Ottoman power was declining. Baldwin's is a striking example of that misapprehension. He started with the conception that Sultan Selim, who founded the Mameluk organisation aimed at a policy of 'equilibrium' between the Beys and the Pasha. The Bey's part was to repress any ambitious designs of the Pasha and the latter was to promote a 'spirit of dissension and revolt among the Beys'. 'Hence the perpetual commotions in the Government of Egypt, hence the division among the Beys, hence the alternate prevalence of parties; hence the continual fluctuation in the tide of power; hence the security and affection of the state,'<sup>(31)</sup> Both Browne and Antes tend to differentiate between the theoretical form of the constitution and the abuses of its application. The Bey, for instance, 'sits for judgement on case of equity' which offered 'every advantage of publicity' but 'the justice of the ruler is ever open to the omnipotent influence of gold'<sup>(32)</sup> Antes, on the other hand, referred to the 'money allowed by the Sultan for carrying the rubbish from Cairo to the Sea (Kara Kjee )

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31. Op.cit. P.P.51-52.

32. Browne, op.cit.P.58.



'but the Beys finds it more for their interest to put the money into their own coffers....'(33) 'I might easily, from my own experience' he says 'give some specimens of law-suits, which would prove, that not the laws themselves, but the execution of them, is chiefly in fault; and that it is in this respect that the differences appear more striking between their government and that which prevails in our own country,'(34) Whatever might be the failure of some of these travellers to appreciate that difference, they all indignantly found fault with the Beys' abuse of power and the evils of despotism. Cleghorn, while in Egypt, noticed that Europeans in Africa possessed democratic views(35) Mme. Montagu who agreed with him, explained this as a reaction to Oriental despotism which they witnessed during their stay in Africa.(36) Bruce, who was undoubtedly more fortunate in visiting Egypt in the time of Ali and Mehmet Beys, writes that '....there is not on earth more brutal, unjust, tyrannical, oppressive, avaricious set of infernal miscreants, than are the members of the Government of Cairo'(37)

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33. Op.cit. P.116.

34. Ibid P.134 footnote.

35. Cleghorn Papers P. 4.

36. Ibid.

37. Vol.I. P.26.

'...The scene of oppression that exists here' writes H.Rooke 'is a disgrace to human nature, both in those who practise and those who suffer it....'(38) But it was certainly a gross misconception among the travellers to confuse the 18th century Beys with the Mameluk Dynasty which existed before the Turkish conquest and to consider the latter as a continuation of the former. Nothing is more significant in the writings of the late 18th century English authors about Egypt than their inadequate knowledge of the history of Egypt. The Encyclopædia Britannica throughout the 18th century called the Mameluk Dynasty the 'Third' but 'wicked' Caliphate. Even the better-informed Browne was extremely inaccurate in recording the events of Egypt for the ten years before his arrival.(39)

The speculation of some of these travellers on the commerce of Egypt will be touched on in the subsequent chapters, and here we shall refer only to their dealings with agriculture. In fact, the country-side was the field least explored by the British travellers and we find Browne the only person informed to any appreciable extent on the conditions of the peasantry. Estimating its potential productivity, Baldwin asserted that Egypt 'can send annually a thousand ships abroad with her superfluous productions'(40) Browne

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38. *op. cit.* P. 93.

39. *Op. cit.* P. 130 & seq.

40. *Op. cit.* P. 6.



estimated the cultivable land at 2,100,000 feddans<sup>(41)</sup>, two-thirds of which were actually cultivated. Antes, in suggesting means to increase the cultivated land through improvement of irrigation, puts forward the building of 'mills or engines' worked by wind to bring water from the Nile<sup>(42)</sup>. Another 'expensive, and not as soon accomplished' plan was 'fortifying the banks of the river (The Nile) throughout its whole length....by confining it into a narrower channel 'by which a considerable piece of valuable ground might be obtained and not a quarter of the water would be required to overflow its banks'<sup>(43)</sup>.

Dealing with the tenure of the land, Browne regarded the majority holding as belonging either to the government or to the religious bodies, and therefore 'the tenants or the cultivators hold either of the Government, or the procurators of the mosques'<sup>(44)</sup>. Browne thought that this was for the 'personal case of the cultivator' or the 'tenant' because '(once) their lands, becoming unoccupied, are never let but on terms ruinous to the tenant'<sup>(45)</sup>. He went on to explain his point by saying 'For as there is a number of bidders, and the managers of them are exorbitant in their demands, the tenant becomes accessory to his own misery, by

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41. Op.cit. P. 92.

42. Op.cit. P.P. 86-87.

43. Ibid.

44. Op.cit. P. 94.

45. Ibid.

engaging to pay the owner so large a portion of the product, that his projects are absolutely insignificant' (46). Such a transaction did not, in fact, appear to have taken place either with the tenant or with the 'Multazim' and the holding of the land either by one or the other was almost hereditary.

Browne again was the only traveller of our period to deal with the Revenue. He pointed out that the sources of revenue were the legal tax or two 'patachas' per feddan estimated as a whole at 12,900 'purses', the additional taxes imposed by the Beys which he estimated at £1,250,000, the custom duties of which he could not give a definite estimation, the 'Jizia' (1,500 purses) and the customs levied on certain artisans and professions. (47) In the first place, Browne left out of account an important item, which contributed to the Miri, the money paid by those holding official posts. Secondly his estimation of the sources of the Miri are grossly inaccurate if compared with those given by Estève (48). The Miri for the land, estimated by Browne as 215,000,000 'Midiés', are about one hundred million more than the entire Miri according to Estève. Thirdly Browne seems to have considered the Miri as revenue only and this is probably the reason for his misapprehension in

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46. Ibid.

47. Op.cit. P. 95.

48. Memoire aui les finances de l'Egypte, depuis sa conquete par le Sultan Selym <sup>et</sup> jusqu'a cella du général en chef Bonaparte, par M. le comte Estève, trésorier général de la Couronne, officier de la Légion d'Honneur, ex-directeur général des revenus de l'Egypte. P.109. Description de l'Egypte. Paris 1822.

Tome 12. P. P. 4 - 148.



in supposing that all the taxes belonged to the 'Miri'.

Sociological study of the inhabitants was the least contribution of these travellers and apart from Browne and Antes, there was, in fact, nothing like a studied observation of the manners and customs of the different classes of people. Most of these travellers suffered two obvious handicaps, inadequacy of time and their ignorance of the language. Irwin, Capper, Rooke, Mrs. Fay and Cleghorn deserve to be called wayfarers rather than travellers. Apart from Browne, Bruce and perhaps Baldwin, none of them evidenced that they possessed any adequate knowledge of the Arabic language. 'Sans la langue' writes a contemporary French traveller<sup>(49)</sup> in Egypt, 'l'on ne sauroit apprécier la genie et le caractère d'une nation: la traduction des interprètes n'a jamais l'effet d'un entretiens direct. Sans le temps, l'on ne peut juger sainement, car le premier aspect des objets nouveaux vous etonne, et jette le disordre dans votre esprit, il faut attendre que le premier tumulte soit calmé et il faut revenir plus d'une fois a l'observation, pour s'assurer sa justesse'. Thirdly the <sup>is</sup> violation of the non-Moslem community in Egypt from the social and cultural life of the community, left these travellers no other alternative but to join the narrow life of the French colony in the Towns or the

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49. Volney, op.cit. Tome I P.IV.

Catholic convents on the fringe of the towns. Fourthly, these travellers were subject to the continuous oppression and avarice of the Beys. It is difficult to think of any British traveller between 1779-1784 who did not suffer in some way under the Beys. Antes relates how he was arrested and beaten<sup>(50)</sup>. Baldwin, Irwin and Rooke were arrested too. Such treatment was attributed to the desire of the Beys, particularly the lesser ones, to extract money from these travellers who were known to have come from the 'treasury lands'. It was also attributed to religious fanaticism. None of these travellers, however, seems to have realized that this treatment was closely connected with the commercial struggle between the Arab merchants and their formidable rivals in the first place and between these Frank merchants and the growing active Syrian colony late in the century. This fanaticism, however, took different shapes. Except in Rosetta, the Franks were obliged to dress in Turkish garb and only their consuls and high officials were allowed to ride on horseback. In the Western part of 'Grand Cairo' they lived in certain quarters which were closed at night. It was obviously difficult for any British traveller in the circumstances to live intimately among the people and study them. Only under Mohamet Ali did the position of the Europeans become in general secure enough to enable a man like

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50. ~~Op.cit. P.~~ Confidence in God. London 1794.



the British Arabist W. Lane to live among the people with 'tolerable ease' and to permit a growing foreign clientèle to found an 'Egyptian Society' in the Capital.<sup>(51)</sup> This opening of Egypt in the early 19th century, together with the fact that since the Napoleonic Expedition the country had become a point of interest and 'curiosity' for the English public at least for some time, contributed to popularizing travels and travel-books on Egypt. That popularization helped considerably to bring Egypt nearer to the English mind much more than the 18th century ever dreamed of.<sup>(52)</sup> But W.C. Brown's overstressing the influence of the popularization of these travels in the Near East in general on what he called the accuracy of the contemporary English knowledge about that part of the World, is somewhat open to question. He quoted as evidence an extract from the Eclectic Review (1812) in which the editor says about Egypt, Palestine and Greece, 'Of these countries, already so amply described by Shaw, Pococke, Maundell, and Chandler, our information is singularly minute and copious...so copious indeed, as in the opinion of many, to have contracted the duties of a writer of travels in the present day, to little more than the correction of the errors of his predecessors.'<sup>(53)</sup>

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51. B. M. Journal of The Egyptian Society. Under 'Cairo'.

52. 'Byron and English interest in the Near East'  
Studies in Philology XXXIV January 1937. P.P.55-64.

53. 1812. P.1685.

Brown obviously disregards the fact that the age overestimated its knowledge of the Near East. The Edinburgh Review,<sup>(54)</sup> referring to Thomas Legh's voyage up the Nile in 1816, claims that 'If Mr. Legh has not contributed much to our knowledge about Egypt, it must be recollected....that there was comparatively little to add, after the multiplied labours of modern travellers in this country! Not less emphatically the Eclectic Review asserts 'The military events, which for a while distinguished that country (Egypt), gave occasion to so many descriptions and historians of it, that we are almost as well acquainted with the river Nile as with the Thames, and with the Delta, as with the countries within a day's journey of the metropolis..<sup>(55)</sup> Since we now know how inadequate this knowledge of the age was, such statements are surely evidence of the low standard of erudition of British contemporary studies concerning Egypt.

Our travellers, besides being unable to live among the people of Egypt, were denied correct sources of information. The Janissaries are obviously unreliable. 'The Greeks... inquisitive...were intimate with the people at large and with the government....rarely represent things as they are, but as

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54. Vol.27. 1818. P.423.

55. 1803.



feel them or would have them to be.....'(56) The 'Copts' a third source, 'were timid and reserved, they fear to discover even what they know,'(57)

There were two main themes in the writings of these travellers, one was to regard the Egyptians as 'degenerate' people in trying to connect them with the ancient Egyptians, and the other was to look upon them as 'primitive' or in a stage of 'barbarity' when trying to connect them with the rest of the Arab domains, since the Arabs had no historical civilization in the contemporary popular eyes of the West. Referring to their degenerate state, J. Capper says '...In my opinion they are now....the most disagreeable and contemptible nation on the earth, bearing no resemblance to the former Egyptians, than the ~~present~~ <sup>ma</sup> ruins do to their once ~~ins~~<sup>ma</sup>ignificant buildings,'(58) Professor J. White wrote at the turn of the century, 'where shall we find a degeneracy like that of the present race of Egyptians, or where an ancient inheritance of greatness and glory, which has been so totally wasted and lost?,'(59) Such a view is essentially biblical. Rooke found the explanation of the alleged degeneracy in what he called 'the languid and effeminate

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56. Browne, op.cit. P.VIII.

57. Ibid.

58. Op.cit. P. 17.

59. Oegyptiaca, London 1801. P.241.

spirit' of the inhabitants and their lack of 'courage to resist tyranny',<sup>(60)</sup> Antes refers to this as 'the bad management of its inhabitants of whom the poorer sort always be content today on a wretched existence, and even sometimes perish for want, in the midst of an earthly paradise'.<sup>(61)</sup> No less biblical was J. White when he referred to this degeneracy by stating that 'God was pleased long since to declare his purpose, and among all the examples that history can show, there is not a more signal object than Egypt, this lying under the Divine interdiction, and left as a fearful witness of his prescience and power'.<sup>(62)</sup> By such biblical views, they seem to satisfy themselves in justifying the existence of despotism of the ruling class in Egypt, which, to their mind, precluded the people's self-expression and appreciation of arts, knowledge and better economic conditions. Looking at the whole question with purely Western eyes, one observes that a remarkable feature in these travellers' writings was the waste of time and thinking over the 'independence' of Egypt of the Turkish and Mameluk tyranny, and the lack of the Egyptians of the requirements, moral and material to materialize such an 'independence'. When relating the story of the revolt of Ali Bey, Parsons states that the 'Inhabitants of Egypt wished to be independent

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61. Op.cit. P. 82. 60 - P. P. 18 - 14.

62. Op.cit. P. 4.



of the Porte and therefore they adore the memory of Ali Bey,.....who mounted the throne of Egypt.....,had he not been treacherously betrayed....by Abu Daheb, his own general, nephew, and son-in-law, (whose) memory is deservedly held in such detestation, that when he is named, they spit on the ground and stamp on it,'<sup>(63)</sup> Al-Jabarti, a contemporary Egyptian historian, conveys an entirely different portrait of the man, who according to him 'was inclined to good, loved the learned and the upright... He hated the impious and never committed any act of such a nature as to throw doubt on his religious sentiments or his honour...'<sup>(64)</sup> It was not in the least his betrayal of Ali Bey that concerned Al-Jabarti but rather his slaughter of the Moslems of Jaffa during his conquest of Palestine. British travellers in Egypt have indeed failed to realize that an 18th century Egyptian was lagging far behind any conception of 'nationalism' and that he regarded himself as a Moslem and little else. That the 18th century patterns of thought and life were not altogether disagreeable to the inhabitants could be shown by their resentment towards their change at the turn of the 18th and early 19th centuries. Apart from the attempts made by some Western scholars to reassess Islam, and the Romantic travellers or poets who found in the Arab world themes for their Romanticism, the

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63. Op.cit. P.301.

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West regarded Islam as having ceased to function as an institution and an ordonnance and thought that the only hope for the Islamic Society was to accept Western institutions and standards. As far as Egypt was concerned, some of these travellers brought forward the suggestion that the country should be ruled by a 'Western nation',<sup>(65)</sup> In fact if we allow for the temporary political prejudices caused by the struggle between England and Revolutionary France which made the reading public in England resent the French occupation and justify that resentment, we find that there was a certain enthusiasm and satisfaction among the English public for the change that took place in Egypt and resulted in opening the country to Western thought and culture. Herein lies the difference between this Western view in regarding Western impact on Egypt and the Egyptian point of view vividly presented by Al-Jabarti. This man regarded the community in which he lived as essentially Islamic. Pan-Arabism, much less its emphasis was not pronounced in him. The decline of the Turkish power in Egypt in the late 17th and throughout the 18th centuries had given rise to different factions mainly military (the Beys and Arab tribes), and to what are called the 'acquired rights', both factors contributing not only to the decentralization of the Government but also to its disintegration. The Government, then, in the eyes of Al-Jabarti

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65. Antes, op.cit. P. 34.



was an organisation beside many others in the country. Its work, according to Al-Jabarti, seems to have been restricted to the protection of the 'acquired rights', the collection of taxes, and the recruitment of labour for public works. The three pillars of Al-Jabarti's society, therefore, were a strict adherence to Islamic ordinances and custom, the decentralization of government, and the maintenance of 'acquired rights'. The attempts made by the French <sup>or</sup> ~~en~~ Mehemet Ali at the turn of the 18th and early 19th centuries to wreck one of these pillars, were indignantly resented by Al-Jabarti. It must be remembered that when he refused to countenance Western thought and culture, he was experiencing the revolutionary type of that civilization which even an English contemporary clergyman would refuse to accept. On the other hand, he was able to appreciate certain values and standards of Western civilization. His language in describing French cultural achievements - after his visit to the French Academy - is characterised by laudatory figures of speech. He was struck by the trial of the assassin of Kleber, comparing it with the justice of the Turks and the Beys who had no respect for 'human souls' and yet claimed to be Moslems. He was impressed again by the life in England where 'no poverty exists', a picture conveyed to him by his friend, Elfi Bey, who visited London in 1802. But if Al-Jabarti had in general refused Western culture, it ought to be remembered that he experienced the revolutionary type of this culture which

a contemporary English clergyman would have equally resented. A greater resentment by Al-Jabarti is shown towards Mehemet Ali's vigorous action in the abolition of 'acquired rights', the dissolving of these factions and the centralization of the Government. Herein lies the fact that he thought that conditions in Egypt were going from bad to worse. The country, to him, was in a better condition under Murad and Ibrahim than under the French, and under the latter better than under Mehemet Ali. From an economic point of view the crisis which Egypt witnessed since the French Expedition made the situation much worse than it was in the 18th century. Again culturally the Western and Turkish impact on Egypt was responsible for that confusion in thought which characterizes the first half of the 19th century. Although the second half of the 18th century saw Taj-ul-'Arus and the history of Al-Jabarti, it is almost definite that the first half of the 19th century brought forth no original work in literature or religious studies.

Reverting to our travellers' conception of the inhabitants, we find that beside the theme of 'degeneracy of the people', they looked upon the Egyptian, in manners and customs, as Arabs. A prominent feature of the social impressions of these travellers was that they never penetrated to what would be called the provinces and therefore did not include the 'fellah'. It was either among the Bedouins or in



Cairo that these travellers were able to see the native inhabitants, the first living on the fringe of the Egyptian life, the second an Islamic centre of different Moslem countries. Naturally, then, Capper with a shallow view of Cairo would only see 'an heterogeneous mixture of all nations' and nothing like 'an original national character'. There was not a clear cut distinction in the mind of these travellers between the Arabs, let alone the differences in their national characters - and the Turks. That the Near East was then culturally, religiously and, to a very great extent, politically, a unity seems to have contributed to that confusion. (66) Chandler wrote throughout his book about the Turks without being apparently aware of the fact that he was describing the Arabs of Aleppo. The twelve years of his life in Egypt, did not prevent Antes from using the words 'Turk' and 'Arab' or 'Turk' and 'Mameluk' interchangeably. He even used the term 'Turkey' to signify all the countries and nations under the Turkish rule. The English contemporary pictures are vivid illustration of that confusion, when things Turkish, Arabic and Oriental in the general sense, were presented to signify either Arabic life or places or persons. The common and striking feature was their failure to realise that the crescent was purely a Turkish symbol. (67)

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66. *Travels in Asia Minor and Greece*. (1764). London 1817.

67. See J. Gillray's *Caricatures* Vol. I. 1830. Nos. 679, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 697 and others. Also see Mavor (W) *Collection of voyages and travels*, Vol. XII. P. 122, Vol. XIII, P. 224, XIV. P. 201 & R. Ainslie, *Views in Egypt*, from the original drawings in the possession of Sir R. Ainslie, London. 1805.

It is remarkable how these travellers were very Western in their outlook on Egyptian society. In fact they emphasized in general ideas and conceptions current in the West about Arabs and the Arab World. Tracing their attitude towards a society different in patterns of thought and life, one might generalise and state that there were two different trends, one to assimilate in the background, christian<sup>in</sup> values, and classical in taste, and another trend breaking vigorously with the popular outlook and pointing enthusiastically to a revaluation or reassessment of this Eastern society. G.W. Browne alone stands to represent the second trend, while the first is eminent in all the others.

One aspect of this assimilation was the numerous comparison of things Egyptian with others in the West. Antes stated that the differences between the Shia and Sunna were parallel to those between the Whigs and Tories in England.<sup>(68)</sup> We have seen some travellers called the Beys the 'Republic'. The defect of such attempts is they eventually become extremely misleading. Another aspect of this assimilation was a trend among these travellers to study the Egyptian society in biblical terms and subsequently illustrate the scripts. We have seen how some of them tried to justify what they termed 'degeneracy of the Egyptians'. At the end of the 18th century, there was

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68. Op.cit.P.6.



in England an interest among the scholars to study the biblical associations in the Near East for the service of the Bible. A reference in Ch.II has been made to the attempt of the Bishop of Clogher to send someone to Egypt to 'make enquiry' into the scripts of the 'Gebel el Mokatab' in Sina. The Church of England, on the other hand had shown an interest in the Eastern churches. As early as 1675 Dr. Marshall translated the book of a famous Coptic scholar Abu Dak<sup>a</sup> under 'Historia Jacubitarum seu Coptorum, in Egypte' in which the author deals with the history of the Coptic Church. In 1693 the book was translated from Latin into English by Sir. E. Sadlier. Four years before the public<sup>ation</sup> of Abu Dak<sup>a</sup>'s book, Dr. Marshall was apparently engaged in preparing the 'four Evangelists in Coptic',<sup>(69)</sup> a work which does not appear to have been published. Around that time a certain F. Brothar<sup>i</sup> was in Upper Egypt on missionary work among the Christian Copts of that country, which are in a great number there, and have many monasteries and ancient churches, but poor,<sup>(70)</sup> One of our travellers; Antes was a Moravian missionary and later the Religious Tract Society took it upon itself to publish episodes of his missionary life in Egypt.<sup>(71)</sup>

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69. Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series January-November 1671. Dr. Thomas Hyde to Williamson Nov.23 P.581.

70. Philosophical transactions Vol.I.P.P.591-592 N.71. P.2151. Some observations lately made by certain Missionaries in Upper Egypt, in a letter written from Cairo, Jan.6,1670, by F.Brothar.

71. John Antes, Confidence in God, London.1799 & Anecdotes in the life of John Antes London 1799.

But Bruce's travels were surely the most interesting in this respect. W. Beloe relates how Bruce 'on his first return from his...travels, had some questions proposed to him on the subject of the Bible in the language of Abyssinia, by a remarkable and highly distinguished member of our church, which he answered very satisfactory', and how he 'voluntarily undertook to translate literally, a number of the Abyssinia Bibles, in order that they might be compared with the English version'.<sup>(72)</sup> Bruce, moreover, brought with him from Abyssinia and Egypt, many manuscripts in Arabic, Coptic and Ethiopic, the most important of which were the Old and New Testaments in Ethiopic of which Beloe himself thought to be (of the greatest importance to the elucidation of Scripture'.<sup>(73)</sup> The Evangelical movement in England in the late 18th century showed itself in attempts by some scholars to use the information and knowledge in the books of travels for the elucidation of the Scriptures. In 1764, Thomas Harmer (1714-1788) an independent minister, published his 'Observations on Divers Passages of Scriptures...from Books of Voyages and Travels'. He explains his method in the preface by stating 'learned men have often employed themselves in noting down places of the Greek classics, which they thought

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72. Op.cit.Vol.II. P.P.46-47.

73. Ibid.



explanatory of passages of Scripture...but modern books of travels and voyages, which, if carefully perused, will afford us many observations, as curious, and as useful....!(74)

Such attempts, however, imply, as the shrewd Analytical Review pointed out,(75) that the 'manners and customs of the oriental nations are nearly the same now as they were two thousand years ago....'

Secondly the question remains whether these travel books, at least which Harmer made use of, offered accurate and reliable information. In the same article <sup>of</sup> the Analytical Review, the editor referred to the qualification of such a traveller by saying that he 'must be, himself, not only a man of letters, but an excellent philologist, not only well *overread* in the general grammar of all the oriental written dialects, but able also to make an analytical comparison of them with every oral variety that is in use between the Nile and the Euphrates. For that purpose, he must have made a long residence in the country, traversed every part of it at leisure, conversed familiarly with every class of people, shared in their meals, partaken of their labours and amusements, in short, become as *if* were one of themselves, and being accustomed to speak, and act, and think as they do. He must moreover be formed by nature for minute and incircumstantial observation, deem nothing immaterial in his enquiries, and note even the smallest peculiarity with justness and precision,(76)

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74. Op.cit.P.III.

75. Vol.3.1789, P.P.578-581.

76. Ibid.

The Review went on to state finally that 'such a man has not yet been found'. 'The greatest part of the relations we have from those <sup>regions</sup> ~~religious~~ are either too romantic to be credited, or too incomplete to be satisfactory' (77). When one field of scientific investigation becomes ancillary to another different in nature and method, little profit is expected.

Browne alone, among the British travellers in Egypt in the second half of the 18th century, sustained the trend of reassessment or revaluation. As a traveller, he possessed 'exactness and veracity'. But one of the factors that added to the unpopularity of his book was the failure of his style and form to satisfy the taste of his age. We cannot here make any literary study of travel literature of the period, but it is essential to trace the general taste of the reading public in England for travel books, depending in this on contemporary comments of different magazines and reviews.

At the end of the 18th century and in the early 19th, travels and travel literature became extremely popular. The period witnessed the growth of British colonial expansion and responsibilities overseas, the improvements of means of transport and the growth of the newly-enriched middle class which began touring abroad. Naturally the travellers were



impelled to publish accounts of the people, places and adventures which they experienced with the result that the period saw the publication of an almost uninterrupted stream of travel books which assumed an important place as popular *genre littéraire*. I have not been able to examine

W.C.Brown's dissertation 'English Interest in the Near East with special reference to travel literature 1775-1825'. But in his article on 'Byron and English interest in the Near East', (78), he defined the requirements of a popular travel book, in a study of contemporary periodicals, as 'accuracy and extension of knowledge' on one hand and 'liveliness in style' on the other. The overstress of 'liveliness in style' at the expense of knowledge caused the shrewd Analytical Review in 1790 to complain that 'every one thinks he can write 'Reflective Tours', or 'Sentimental journeys', (79). How far did Brown succeed in fulfilling these two requirements? He was better-known as an African discoverer. Indeed his Ammonian Expedition in *Suwa*, although involving, according to Rennal, much more personal risk than Alexander's, was fruitless from an academic point of view. Browne was closely connected with Darfur, as he was the first European to describe the country. As far as Egypt is concerned, his account of the

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78. Studies in Philology. Vol. XXXIV. January 1937, P.P. 55-64.

79. Vol. 8. 1790. P.P. 154-155.

political, financial and social conditions, though in many cases misinforming, is by far the most detailed of all the British travellers in Egypt in the second half of the 18th century.

As far as the second requirement, Browne seems to have failed abjectly. Whether it is because of his lack of descriptive power, or that his enthusiasm was unaccompanied by any literary liveliness, the fact remains that he is intolerably pedantic and affected. Concerning his form, on the evidence of contemporary British magazines, the first criticism was want of 'narrower compass' and 'arrangement'. The Annual Register, in a remarkable article 1799<sup>(80)</sup>, accused Browne of not succeeding in giving 'mental entertainment' and not avoiding 'mental disgust'. 'Mental entertainment' maintained the Register 'is an object, we hesitate to say a subordinate one, at which books of travels aim; and we are not able, perhaps, to exhibit passages which claim the praise of elegance of narration or grandeur of description...'. 'The mental disgust in the several parts of the work, are obnoxious to the feelings and opinions of the generality of readers'.<sup>(81)</sup> This brings us to the second factor of Browne's unpopularity; his defensive attitude of the Arab people. The comparison which

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80. F.499 et seq.

81. Ibid.



Browne set between the manners and customs of the Orientals and those of the Europeans, out of which he showed inclination towards the first,<sup>(82)</sup> was hardly acceptable to the contemporary reading public in England. Beloe accused Browne of being 'an avowed disciple of the school of Volney, and the other miscreant writers of that stamp',<sup>(83)</sup> As far as Browne's travels are concerned, Beloe's judgement is grossly unfair. Browne himself states very clearly in his preface that he deals with Egypt in different terms from Volney.<sup>(84)</sup> The British Critic considered it as 'exceedingly non *erical*',<sup>(85)</sup> The Eclectic Review accused Browne of being 'prejudiced against Christianity' and even of 'infidelity',<sup>(86)</sup>

m/ Browne neither appears to be prejudiced against Christianity, as his contemporaries thought, nor does his work suffer from 'an accentric encornium of eastern manners and customs at the expense of the civilization of Europe' as a biographer states.<sup>(87)</sup> He was undoubtedly influenced by the

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82. Op.cit. P.513 et seq.

83. Op.cit. II. P.59.

84. Browne, Preface, P.VI.

85.

86. Vol.III.Part.I. May 1807. P.385.

87. D.N.B. under W.G.Browne (African traveller)

88. Op.cit. P.513.

89. Op.cit. P.513.

French Revolution, in politics he was a Republican, in religion a Liberal. But the most influential philosophy of the French Revolution on Browne was the 'paradox of Rousseauism'; the belief in the superiority of the 'noble savage' to civilized man. The essence of this paradox is based on preference of 'nature' to the complexity, variety and artificiality of the social and economic patterns of the Western civilization. Browne armed with that 'Rousseauism', philosophised the Oriental society, or rather the Moslem Arab society. It would be pointless, perhaps, to criticise his study as being inadequate, since he himself declared that 'the subject is very far from having been exhausted',<sup>(88)</sup> As we cannot follow him here in every topic in his comparative ~~contemporary~~ study, it might suffice as an example to refer to his conception of education.

Browne defined his conception of education as the 'art of forming man on the principles of nature...By the principles of nature are meant, the preservation of the body in all its functions, and the mind with all its faculties and powers in the most perfect manner possible....',<sup>(89)</sup> The best method is 'the indirect encouragement to puerile variety and arrogance - prolonging the period of childish ineptitude, and

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88. Op.cit. P.535.

89. Op.cit. P.513.



leaving to chance the instruction to be received in the great art of life....'(90) In trying to prove how this kind of education was more applied in the East than the West, he says 'The dress of children (in the East) is free from ligatures their diet simple, and they are accustomed to variations of season and inured to fatigue. They are generally taught to serve in the family of their parents. They hence learn what to expect from those whom they may afterwards command. Among the middle class there are few who do not know how to cook their victuals and to work their own linen. These habits are of inestimable utility in *the army* and in travelling, and render them much less helpless than ourselves. Our children are certainly taught many useful things which they do not learn; but they also learn some usefulness to which we pay no attention. These are a part of the advantages of Oriental education. Among its serious inconveniences may be enumerated, an excessive credulity, the offspring of profound ignorance; and in places of commercial resort, a keenness bordering on dishonesty and falsehood' (91)

In spite of the hard criticism of the reading public to Browne's attempt, there was a section of the public less unsympathetic to Arabian life and thought. Defending Browne

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90. Ibid. P.514.

91. Ibid.

in 1799 the editor of *The Critical Review* said 'We are not inclined, with pope Gregory the Great, to burn the works of the ancient classic authors because they were pagans,'<sup>(92)</sup>

In trying to estimate the influence of these travel books during our period on English contemporary knowledge of Egypt, and on English literature, one should bear in mind that this tentative study is by no means exhaustive. The subject itself demands a separate dissertation and here we need be only concerned first in pointing out that the influence was there and secondly to trace it in some contemporary English literary works. Two reservations are necessary. First, we should not disregard the fact that some works (like Parsons ~~and Mrs. Tay~~) were published in the early 19th century with the result that they were almost lost among the abundant early 19th century travel books. Secondly, that up to the turn of the century, the standard works on Egypt that enjoyed the great popularity were those of Pococke and Norden and still greater those of the French travellers particularly Volney and Savary. Therefore, however, insignificant the influence of our travellers might have even on the public of their time, it can be roughly specified between 1780 with Irwin's travels up to 1801 with Baldwin's political recollections. One of the best illustrations

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92. Vol.27. August 1799. P. 286 et seq.



of the influence of the travel books on the general knowledge of the educated public is the article on Egypt in consecutive editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica throughout the 18th century. It showed first that the scope and technique in any one article is coloured by the scope and technique found in a certain travel book. Secondly that it incorporates the very same inaccuracies of one traveller or the other. Thirdly while academic assessment is not pronounced, a growing zeal and enthusiasm for Egyptian studies is apparent.

The 1773 edition devotes a half-page to Egypt, almost entirely confined to its geographical position, including a rather inaccurate statement on the frontier of the country bounded by Nubia on the East. In contrast the article of the next edition (1778-1782) is of twenty-five pages.- Its bulk treats of the history of Egypt, ancient and mediaeval, followed by an account of the Pyramids, the Nile, the Nilometer and the inhabitants. Norden and Pococke have been acknowledged as sources of information. One might point out the inaccuracies and inadequacies in the part concerning the political and social conditions. 'The Constitution and Government of this country' the article runs, 'seem to be but little known to modern times. A viceroy is sent to Egypt, under the title of pasha or bashaw of Cairo, and is one of the greatest officers of the Ottoman Empire, but as the interior parts of Egypt are almost

inaccessible to strangers, we know little of their government and laws'.<sup>(93)</sup> The article obviously confuses the Beys with the heads of the Arab tribes. It does not refer to what was the most influential figure in the 18th century Egypt, the Sheikh El Balad, and it is certainly mistaken in stating that the Pasha had under him 'a large regular army'.

Referring to the Copts, the writer states that it would be 'hard to say what species of Christianity is professed by the Christian Copts....but they profess themselves to be of the Greek Church, and enemies of that of Rome'.<sup>(94)</sup>

The writer of the article in 1797 edition drew from Savary, Volney and Bruce. Comparing this edition with the immediately previous one, the striking addition in the latter is the study of the natural and physical geography of the country and the detailed account of the Mameluk system and the revolt of Ali Bey, both obviously taken from Savary and Volney. Moreover, the classification of the population is different, for whereas the 1778-83 edition copied the early 18th century classification of five groups, i.e. Bedouins, Arabs, Copts, Turks and foreign Christians (Franks), the later edition classified them into four main strata; the Arabs (Bedouins, Magrebis, Peasants), the Copts, the Turks and the Memeluks, thereby including the Bedouins in the class of Arabs, adding the Mameluks as a separate class and

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93. 'Egypt'. v.2. I.

94. *Ibid.*



considering the Franks as a foreign element.

The article in this last edition (which was not altered in the 1810 edition except for the additional account of the French Expedition) points out the popularity of the French works which had begun to manifest itself from 1785 up to the turn of the 18th and early 19th centuries.

In the 18th century the French enjoyed more influence than the British, both culturally and politically, in the Near East. An aspect of this influence was the acknowledged moral responsibility of France for the 'Chret d'Orient' and the work of Catholic missionaries. As far as Egypt is concerned, this influence did not touch the bulk of Egyptian society, it is only to be found in the Levantine active elements of the Near East, themselves living on the fringe of the Islamic Society. Nor do the French missionaries appear to have been successful even with the Copts. Their failure was evidenced by the French Consul Maillet, who admitted that the only means of converting a Copt was to kidnap him when he was a child.<sup>(95)</sup>

French travels in the 18th century are another aspect of this interest. In contrast to the self-contented, reserved British travellers, the French visited Egypt primarily to study the country and to come out with accounts which though

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95. Butler, E. L. The story of the Church of Egypt. Vol. II. P. 215.

dealing with political and physical conditions on a wide scale, do not show any better understanding of the Eastern mentality. P. Carre<sup>(96)</sup> deals with these travellers in a classical way, but our concern here is their influence on the English reading public.

The most popular of all in England in the late 18th century were, Savary<sup>(97)</sup> the pre-romantic, Volney the pre-scientific and Sonnini<sup>(98)</sup> the naturalist. Their books were translated into English almost immediately, Savary (1785), Volney (1787) and Sonnini (1798). Volney's version suffers from many errors and the first slipshod translation of Sonnini was followed in the next year by the admirable version of Hunter. Savary's extensive knowledge of ancient learning distinguished him as an antiquarian in the eyes of the *Gentlemen's Magazine* which ranked him before Norden<sup>(99)</sup>. That he copied copiously from other travellers and writers and that he had never 'mis le pied' in Upper Egypt in spite of his claim to have done so, came to light in the last years of the century and became the subject of bitter criticism by later English and French travellers.<sup>(100)</sup>

Sonnini was distinguished by his visit to Upper Egypt and his nature study of the country. This latter was

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96. *Voyageurs et écrivains français en Egypte. Tome. I. Le Caire. 1932.*

97. Savary (Claude) *Lettres sur l'Egypte..etc.* Paris 1785.

98. Sonnini (Charles N.S.) *Voyage dans la Haute et Basse Egypte..etc.* Paris 1799.

99. 1786. P.893.

100. Antes, *Op.cit.* Preface. Volney, *Op.cit.* P. 92



was considered by the Critical Review as a 'valuable supplement' to the studies of 'Massetquist and Friskal.' (101)

Although Sonnini's work professes to contain travels in Upper as well as Lower Egypt, more than two-thirds of the whole is absorbed by the 'triste' description of the Delta, a subject that had been dealt with by so many previous travellers. Moreover, 'in the southern direction he is exceeded by Bruce...in the western and more interesting parts by Browne'. (102) Both facts had induced the editor of the British Critic (103) to remark that Sonnini's travels 'as a publication... illustrative of Egypt,... is entitled to ~~no~~ particular esteem, and probably will never be referred to as any decisive authority'. The more apt criticism, however, was that Sonnini seems to have made his object 'to describe Egypt as it was when the French took possession of it, to compare its degenerated state at that period with the splendor which it was to re-assume...'. In short as the Critical Review (104) noticed Sonnini has allowed 'national vanity' and 'political views' to interfere with his writings.

Volney enjoyed the best reputation by far. His 'Travels' is characterized by two features, it was systematic and it was realistic; the first rendered his book a 'didactic work' rather than a book of travel; the second feature earned for it the praise of contemporary English periodicals.

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101. Vol.28.P.244.

102. British Critic, Vol.15.P.P.270-271.

103. Ibid. P.524.

104. Vol.28 March 1800. P.241.

The author of the 'Ruines' looked upon Egypt with critical western eyes, not with those of the 'Grand Siècle' but with those of the Revolution. The Annual Register describes it as 'an accurate and faithful account,' (105) The English Review claims that he had 'avoided the errors of former French travellers, who have indulged the sallies of imagination at the expense of veracity,' (106) The realism of Volney, which brought him popularity not only in England but all over Europe, is not so much in any understanding on his part of the Egyptian mentality or the social problems of the people, but simply his capacity to reveal to the world in strong terms the political and economic decadence of the country and the military weakness of the Beys. To emerge from its decadence, Volney suggested that Egypt should be ruled by a cultured Western nation. As was popularly believed in England (107), France was to be the 'cultured nation' and hence in England Volney had been unjustly imputed as involved in the schemes of French colonization, culminating in the French invasion of Egypt. The fact is that Volney was not in favour of any French colonization in the Near East, and the Western 'cultured nation' he had in mind was Russia. In 1788 he published his pamphlet 'Considérations sur la guerre des Turcs',

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105. 1787. P. 196.

106. Vol. VII. P. 110.

107. See for example Gillray's Caricatures on the French Expedition to Egypt. Gillray. O. P. Cit.



in which he argued strongly and satirically against the French occupation of Egypt.

Carre paints the travels of Volney in rather exaggerated colours<sup>(108)</sup>. That the author of the 'Ruines' was a philosopher, precise and pro-scientific is beyond doubt, but Carre's claim that his travels in Egypt are a display of these qualifications is somewhat open to question. Like the pilgrims of the Middle Ages and travellers of the 17th century, Volney visited Alexandria, Rosetta, Cairo and Suez. 'After a stay of seven months in Cairo, meeting many difficult obstacles to a proper examination of the interior of the country, and too little assistance in learning Arabic, I determined to proceed to Syria'<sup>(109)</sup> 'L'état moins orageux de cette province a mieux répondu à mes intentions'<sup>(110)</sup>. If Volney's stay in Egypt did not offer him an adequate scope to what he called 'champ propre aux observations politiques et morales', then surely his account of the political, economic and social conditions of the country must have been derived from indirect sources of information rather than any direct contact. We will pass over his fantastic theory of the negroid origin of the Egyptians, his inadequate knowledge of Arabic learning, his misapprehensions of the Mameluk system, to come to his conception of the social and economic structure of Egyptian

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108. Op.cit. P. 92 et seq.

109. Op.cit. P.VII.

110. Op.cit. P.VIII.

society.. 'L'état (of Egypt)' he records 'est *proprement* divisé en deux factions; l'une, celle du peuple vain<sup>queur</sup>~~queur~~, dont les individus occupent tous les emplois de la civile & militaire; l'autre, celle du peuple vaincu, qui remplit tous les classes subalternes de la société. La faction gouvernante s'attribuant à titre de conquête, le droit exclusif de toute propriété, ne traite la faction gouvernée, que comme un instrument passif de ses jouissances; & celle ci à son tour, dépouillée de tout intérêt personnel, ne rend à l'autre que le moins qu'il lui est possible' (111). Neither socially nor economically was the relation between the Mameluks and the people, that of conqueror and conquered. Al-Jabarti calls the Beys the 'Egyptian Princes'. Economically, the agricultural system which Egypt witnessed was not one subjected to the variations due to the views of one conqueror or another, its antiquity proves that it was a necessity to the circumstances of Egyptian life.

Volney's and Savary's popularity in England is an example of the strong impact of French literary patterns on England concerning Near Eastern studies since the beginning of the 18th century. Their works were published at a time when no less than fifty years had passed since Pococke published his travels. Whereas Pococke and Norden were too classical



for the taste of the reading public of the late 18th century, and too expensive to purchase, Savary and Volney seem in general to have been popularly informative. The best illustration, perhaps of the overpopularization of the French travels, even in academic circles in England, is that Savary was considered as an authority on the history of Ali Bey although his account on that particular point was copied exclusively from Lusignan's book published in London two years earlier.

The popularity of the Near East travel books had a certain influence on contemporary English literature. The fact that Romantic poets chose their themes from the Near East, rendered them dependent on the travel books for facts, interpretations concerning this part of the world. Referring to the influence of the travellers, W.L.Bowles exclaims in some of his poems<sup>(112)</sup>:

Once thou' (Thebes) went rich, and proud, and great!  
This busy-peopled isle (England) was then  
A waste, or roamed by savage men,  
Whose gay descendants (travellers) now appear  
To work thy wreck of glory here.

Although we cannot trace the influence of every traveller on every Romantic poet, we might, however, give as an example, the influence of Bruce on a minor poet like Bowles and a greater one such as Coleridge.

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112. Poetical Works, Edinburgh 1855. Vol.II.P.287.

The theme of Bowles' 'Spirit of Discovery',<sup>(113)</sup> namely that the descendants of Ham, after their dispersion, first gained the summits of the Ethiopian mountains, then formed subterranean abodes, and, in the process of time, their descendants became the people of Egypt, built Thebes, obscured tradition of the Ark, first made voyages, is taken from Bruce.

Professor Lowes in his analytical study of 'Kubla Khan' by Coleridge deals with the influence of Bruce's travels on Coleridge's dream. Firstly not only had the poet read Bruce, but held his work in high esteem<sup>(114)</sup>. Secondly Lowes showed that the 'Sacred River' in Coleridge was the Nile and that 'Abora' was the 'River Abola' mentioned by Bruce.<sup>(115)</sup>

One must be cautious, as to the degree to which Coleridge can be said to have been inspired by Bruce's work. A phrase here or there may have caught the poet's imagination and the following examples are, at the best, tentative suggestions as to what Bruce may have contributed to Coleridge's imagery.

113. Op.cit. P.P. 287 et seq. Vol. II.

114. 'Road to Xanadu' - London P.133 and P.370.

115. Ibid. P.372.



Coleridge.A

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted  
 Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!  
 A savage place! as holly and enchanted  
 As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
 By woman wailing for her demon-lover!

Compare Bruce.A

The (whole mountain) was covered with thick wood,  
 which often occupied the very edge of the precipices  
 on which we stood.....just above this almost impenetratable  
 wood, in a very romantic attitude<sup>situation</sup>, stands St. Michael,  
 in a hollow space like a niche between the hills....  
 The Nile here is not four yards over....(The whole  
 Company) were sitting in the shade of a grove of  
magnificent cedars - The banks (or the Nile) - are  
 covered with black, dark, and thick groves...a very  
 rude and awful face of nature, a cover from which  
 our fancy suggested a lion should issue, or some animal  
 or monster yet more savage and ferocious....'Strates',  
 said I 'be in no such haste; remember the water is  
enchanted!.....In the middle of this cliff (at Gush),  
 in a direction straight north towards the fountains, is  
 a prodigious cave...From the edge of the cliff of Gush...  
 the ground slope with a very easy descent due north...  
 On the east the ground descends likewise a very easy...  
 slope...From (the) west side of it...the ascent is very  
 easy and gradual...all the way covered with good earth,  
 producing fine grass.

Bruce. III. 589, 593, 563-64, 600, 674, 635-36.

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ColeridgeB

And all should say, Beware! Beware!  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!

Compare BruceB

(The King) had desired me to ride before him, and show  
 him the horse I had got from Fasil....It happened that,  
 crossing the deep bed of a brook, a plant of the Kantuffa  
 hung across it. I had upon my shoulders a white goat-skin,  
 of which it did not take hold; but the King, who was  
 dressed in the habit of peace, his long hair floating all  
around his face, wrapt up in his mantle, or thin cloak,  
so that nothing but his eyes could be seen....'

Bruce - IV. 63-67.

W.C.Brown<sup>2</sup>, in estimating the influence of the British travellers in the Near East<sup>(116)</sup>, suggested that the travellers themselves emphasised dominant ideas current at home, with the result that this region of the world became, at the end of the 18th and in the early 19th centuries, strongly imbued with these ideas, which were mainly romantic. He points out three main themes commonly used by travellers and reflected in the works of the minor poets at the turn of the century; 'the ruins of empire', 'Romantic Landscape' and 'Romantic episode'. Closely related to the ruins theme, are two ancillary ideas, namely, the primitive virtues of some Eastern people (Arabs, Turks) and the degeneracy of others (Greeks, Egyptians) to which we have already referred. Examples of the other three themes will be given here, both in travel books and in the minor poets.

One of the most current themes in such books and poetry of the Near East was the 'Ruins of Empire'. This theme found its roots in the extreme popularity of the Mediaeval and Gothic world, and took the shape of historical philosophy like Volney's 'Ruines' or 'Melancholy' of the time like Gibbon. The Near East with its ancient empires in Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria and Greece offered a proper field for such themes. The first British traveller during our period who romanticized the ruins of Egypt was Irwin who wrote

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116. 'English Travel Books and Minor Poetry about the Near East, 1775-1825'. *Philological Quarterly* Vol. XVI. July 1937, P.P.249-271.



his 'Eastern Epilogues' during his tour through Arabia and Egypt on his way from India to England and published them shortly before his 'Travels'. His 'Alexis' or 'The Traveller', which he wrote at Alexandria is a good example of this theme. It shows melancholy and regret at the decline of the 'Egyptian Empire' and the tragic contrast of the ruins falling into the hands of 'Arabs and Turks' (117?)

Ye pow'rs of commerce ! here your succor bring,  
 To happier themes accord the silver string.  
 Behold the port to which blue Neptune gave  
 A boundless empire o'er the subject wave!  
 Behold the port where freighted navies ~~meat~~,  
 Plenty's full horn, and trade's unrival'd seat!  
 From ev'ry soil where ev'ry product came,  
 And stamp'd imperial with its founder's name!  
 These, yet unsetting, sublimer views displayed,  
 And, were thou conquest, diefy his shade!  
 And must these relics hasten to decay,  
 And like inferior objects pass away?  
 Shall future times recover from their dust  
 The Casker'd coin and mutilated bust?

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O death to think! must now the abject race  
 Of Turks and Arab lord it in their place?

The theme of 'Ruins' of Ancient Egypt' was echoed in the poetry of William Lisle Bowles (118) in his 'Spirit of Discovery', 'Spirit of Navigation' (119), 'The Egyptian Tomb' (120) and many others. The following verses not only point out the melancholy and grandeur of the ruins but also suggested that the idea that the French army halted at the sight of the ruins

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117. P.11.

118. Poetical Works, Edinburgh 1855. Vol.II. P.P.245-248.

119. op.cit. Vol.II. P.287.

120. Ibid. Vol.II.P.266.

of Thebes may well have been taken from Denon<sup>(121)</sup>.

Where art thou, Thebes? The chambers of the dead  
Echo, Behold! and twice ten thousand men,  
Even in their march of rapine and of blood,  
Involuntarily halted, at the sight  
Of thy majestic wreck, for many a league -  
Sphinxes, colossal *fanes*, and obelisks -  
Pale in the morning sun!

Irwin's series of adventures with a group of Bedouins from Kossier to Kené are a vivid example of romantic episode. Among the minor poets we find this theme in Bowles 'Spirit of Discovery'.

Irwin again adopted a romantic attitude in his description of landscape. This is characterized by a distinction between the 'beautiful' and the 'sublime', a romantic sensitiveness to the beauties of nature, and a stress on the picturesque beauty of panoramic scene. Among the minor poets, this theme is to be found in Henry Kirke White's following verses<sup>(122)</sup>.

How beautiful upon the *element*,  
The Egyptian moonlight sleeps!  
The Arab on the bank hath pitch'd his tent,  
The light wave dances, sparkling, o'er the *deeps*;  
The tall reeds whisper in the gale,  
And o'er the distant tide wave slow the silent sail.

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121. Ibid. Vol.I. P.13. Denon (Vivant) Voyage dans la Base et la Route Egypte, pendant les Compagnes du Général Bonaparte. 2. vol. Paris 1802.

122. Poetical Works, Boston 1855. P.307.



## Introduction

### The Indian Factor in the Development of British Interests

The Indian factor, after falling to a certain extent in the early part of the century, gradually became a factor between Egypt and Britain in the latter part of the century.

It was in 1875 that the British Government, in order to secure the Suez Canal, purchased the Egyptian shares in the Canal Company. This was a landmark event in the history of British political interest in Egypt in the late 19th century. It was then that the British began to take a more active part in the affairs of Egypt. The British Government, in order to secure the Suez Canal, purchased the Egyptian shares in the Canal Company. This was a landmark event in the history of British political interest in Egypt in the late 19th century. It was then that the British began to take a more active part in the affairs of Egypt.

### POLITICAL & COMMERCIAL INTEREST

Since 1875, the British Government has been actively engaged in the affairs of Egypt. The British Government, in order to secure the Suez Canal, purchased the Egyptian shares in the Canal Company. This was a landmark event in the history of British political interest in Egypt in the late 19th century. It was then that the British began to take a more active part in the affairs of Egypt. The British Government, in order to secure the Suez Canal, purchased the Egyptian shares in the Canal Company. This was a landmark event in the history of British political interest in Egypt in the late 19th century. It was then that the British began to take a more active part in the affairs of Egypt.

In the first place, it was the British Government that was the main factor in the development of British interests in Egypt. The British Government, in order to secure the Suez Canal, purchased the Egyptian shares in the Canal Company. This was a landmark event in the history of British political interest in Egypt in the late 19th century. It was then that the British began to take a more active part in the affairs of Egypt.

## CHAPTER V.

The Indian factor: re-orientation of British interest.

The Levant Company, after failing to foster Anglo-Egyptian relations, eventually became a barrier between Egypt and England in the second half of the 18th century.

Between the last attempt (1759) to renew commercial relations with Egypt and 1769, British interest <sup>in</sup> that country was at a low ebb. But the development of events both in Egypt and India in the seventies constituted the major stimulus to British political interest in Egypt in the late 18th century; it was what one might call the 'Indian factor'. There were two aspects of this reorientation. One was the British-Indian trade with Egypt and the other was the use of the overland route through Egypt for communication between Egypt and India. From first to last, these interests were pursued by the Servants of the East India Company and the free merchants. At best, such an interest succeeded neither in establishing itself seriously nor in convincing British foreign policy of the importance of the whole issue. In essence this interest was gravitating to the geographical importance of Egypt to the British Empire in India. The French Expedition to Egypt (1798-1801) did not discover that importance but heightened its significance.

In the first place it should be noted that it was the British and not the French who took the initiative in this direction. In the second place it was again the British



who took the initiative in approaching Egypt independently, disregarding the Ottoman sovereignty. At first the question of British-Indian trade with Egypt came into being, and resulted in the Abu El-Dahab- Hastings commercial treaty of 1775. In its wake came the question of communications between England and India through Egypt, where failure or success, from a practical point of view, depended entirely on Indian trade with Egypt. The growth of French interest which resulted in the treaty of 1784 between France and the ruling Beys of Egypt, was the climax of international competition between England, France and Austria. The incentive of the group of servants of the East India Company and free merchants in this competition aimed at establishing British interests proper in Egypt. Contrasting with their views in this international competition was the attitude of the British Foreign Office. Throughout this period, British foreign policy was characterized by a lack of directness and clarity and by an absence of sympathetic acceptance of the views of these Servants and free merchants. It was not yet the age of *laissez-faire* and the British foreign policy was orthodox in its compliance with the views of the two Eastern Companies when they began to oppose reluctantly this interest in its second phase. The only factor in British foreign policy in Egypt which continued to stimulate such interest was its sensitiveness to French activities in Egypt. Even in this the Foreign Office had no

clear conception of French policy in Egypt thanks to the inaccurate reports of successive British Ambassadors at Constantinople and British consuls in Egypt. The best illustration of this fact is that every French manoeuvre in Egypt was interpreted by the British Foreign Office as aiming at opening Egypt for French-Indian trade, even at the time when France was resolved upon the more serious scheme of occupying that country. When French policy proved to be a failure in establishing French-Indian trade through Egypt, British foreign policy with regard to British interest in Egypt began to lose vigour and in 1793 Britain closed its Consulate in Egypt.

From the Turkish conquest early in the 16th century the Red Sea had been closed to all Christian shipping. This is one of the reasons, why, for over two centuries, the old trade route to the Orient via Egypt and the Red Sea was of necessity abandoned by the merchants of Europe, and why the Cape of Good Hope took the place of Cairo and Alexandria as the main channel of communication with India and the Far East. In theory, no Christian vessel approaching the Turkish dominions from the Indian Ocean could sail beyond Mocha. But from the end of the 17th century the ships of the English East India Company had been allowed to go as far as Judda, by the connivance of the Sherif of Mecca, who found the infraction of the Sultan's mandate a profitable one. Nevertheless, beyond that port



the Red Sea remained strictly closed to the 'Infidel'.

However, in the second half of the 18th century events both in Egypt and in India stimulated British interest in Egypt. In 1766, Ali Bey, Governor of Cairo, and one of the twenty-four Beys of Egypt, seized power by a coup d'état. Impelled by the belief that a prosperous commercial status for the country would enable him to establish his independence and widen the breach with the Ottoman Empire, the Bey, advised by the Venetian merchant, Carlo Rosetti, who exercised over him a certain influence, involved himself in the project of conquering Arabia as a necessary preliminary to direct Indian trade with Suez. In October 1770, Egyptian rule was established in the Hijaz and directions were given that European ships should be received with 'greatest kindness' in the Egyptian possessions in the Red Sea.<sup>(1)</sup> Steps were taken in Egypt to establish the peace and order, necessary to trade. Indeed, an Egyptian contemporary chronicler wrote - obviously with some exaggeration - about the reign of Ali Bey that 'a person could travel alone at night, riding or walking with great numbers of Draahms or Dananeers to any place, and sleep in the open field without harm'.<sup>(2)</sup> Lusignan, an advisor of the Bey, relates that a Jewish commissioner who imposed heavily on the traders, was put to death and that a Maalem 'Maichael Pharhat' took his place.<sup>(3)</sup>

1. Lusignan, P.P.102-3; Bruce, I.P.105.

2. Al-Jabarti, II. P.P. 384-5. (I consulted the Arabic text).

3. Maalem was a title of honour signifying master. Ibid. P.P.102-3

It would be well now to turn to affairs in India. Indian trade had been opened with Judda in the Red Sea since the end of the 17th century. Indian free merchants and free mariners considered this trade which, hitherto, was called the 'Gulf Trade' as a means of evading the regulations which restricted the English trade with Europe to the East India Company. But since the beginning of the second half of the 18th century the Gulf trade began to decline seriously due to the oppression of the Sherif of Mecca and his officers who imposed heavily on these merchants. From the latter sprang the idea of carrying the trade further to Suez and so evade the heavy impositions of the Sherif. The idea found a readily sympathetic acceptance in Warren Hastings, the then Governor-General of Bengal. The revaluation of the Gulf trade was also closely connected with the question of the servants of the East India Company. In the first place, owing to their inadequate salaries, they were permitted to share in the export trade on their own account. But between 1757 and 1760, they were also able, because of the collapse of the power of the Nizamut after the victory of Plassey, to take up the internal trade as well which had hitherto been in the hands of the natives. The native attempt to retrieve this trade proved a failure, for the 'dustuk', the privilege of not paying duty on goods in their transit down the Indian rivers, granted to the servants by the Company, thereby enabling them to procure supplies at half the cost



incurred by their native rivals. Their influence, moreover, enabled them to force their goods on the country people at their own prices 'a practice called Barja or Guchavut'.<sup>(4)</sup> By these methods not only was the native government deprived of its dues from considerable trade, but its poorer subjects were reduced to ruin. Between 1760 and 1767 this question provoked constant dispute between the 'Society of Trade', representative of the servants and free merchants, and the Court of Directors. At the insistence of the Court of Directors the servants' monopoly of salt, the last monopoly they held, was abolished at the end of 1767 and in September 1768 'the Society of Trade' ceased to exist.<sup>(5)</sup> Yet this was no solution to the problem of the servants, for immediately after this, they began to lend their surplus money to foreign companies.<sup>(6)</sup> The amount of private money thus lent, estimated by Burke in his ninth report at a million sterling per annum, resulted in these foreign companies competing with the Company's sales in France, Sweden and Denmark.<sup>(7)</sup> What is more, this method of lending was a contributory factor to the drain of currency from Bengal, and in 1772 that Province nearly exhausted its circulating

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4. House of Commons Reports, Vol.II.,P.293.

5.M. Jones, Warren Hastings in Bengal, P.P.47-92.

6. I.O.F.R. Egypt & the Red Sea V. 'Considerations on the country trade of India.

7. Ibid.

specie.<sup>(8)</sup> There is every reason to believe that Warren Hastings, the then newly-appointed Governor-General of Bengal, considered the trade with Egypt, hitherto called 'the trade Gulfs' as 'the only source left to them (the servants),'<sup>(9)</sup> and as not only helping indirectly to solve the question of the drain on currency by stopping the Servants from lending their money, but directly by procuring specie, the chief return of the trade with Egypt, since the 'Turke had very little to sell,'<sup>(10)</sup>. The trade of Suez was estimated at half a million sterling per annum<sup>(11)</sup>. Besides, Hastings considered that it would provide a great market for Bengal manufactures which employed the natives and enabled them to discharge the principal taxes!<sup>(12)</sup>

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8. Ibid 'A review of the transactions in Bengal during the last ten years'.

9. I.O. Marine Records Misc. 891 'Extracts of Bengal Public Consultations.

10. Ibid

11. I.O.F.R. 'Egypt & the Red Sea' V. 'Considerations on the country trade of India'.

12. S.P. 54. Baldwin to Ainslie, 20 June 1778.



These projects materialised when James Bruce, the British traveller, and lately British consul at Algiers, visited Judda in May 1769 and heard the complaints of the English merchants of the oppression of the Sherif of Mecca and his officers, particularly of 'a most destructive measure introduced of forcing them to give presents, which was only an inducement to oppress, that the gift might be greater',<sup>(13)</sup> At Judda, there were two merchant vessels from India; the Merchant of Bengal, commanded by Captain Cuthbert Thornhill, and The Lion, in charge of Captain Thomas Price of Bombay, both considerably interested in a direct trade with Suez.<sup>(14)</sup> A plan was formulated whereby Bruce (after his visit to Abyssinia) would try to conclude a commercial treaty with the ruling Bey in Cairo, on behalf of the British traders in India, while Thornhill would sail to Suez on his next voyage from Bengal.<sup>(15)</sup> While Bruce was making his way to Egypt, Ali Bey's conquest of Arabia was affected. Captain Thornhill wrote to the Bey in 1770 from Mocha asking him to open a 'channel of trade to Suez',<sup>(16)</sup> Hoskins states that Ali Bey broached the subject with Hastings<sup>(17)</sup> This is highly improbable for it conflicts with the text of Hastings' letter to Ali Bey on 31st December 1772, in which he mentioned that Captain Thornhill, on arriving at Bengal from Mocha,

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13. Bruce II. P.P. 188-189.
  14. Ibid.
  15. Ibid.
  16. Cal. of Per. Corresp. IV. P.121. Hastings to Ali Beck of Egypt 31 Dec 1772.
  17. P. 14. British routes to India. New York. 1928.

communicated to him Ali Bey's reply to the Captain's letter, giving permission to English ships to trade with Suez. But as the Captain arrived late that year 'no ships could be sent out, but that one will be despatched next year with considerable merchandise'. At the same time, Hastings sent some presents to Ali Bey 'for favour of his acceptance',<sup>(18)</sup> In reply Ali Bey wrote 'a very sensible letter' 'promising all the indulgence and assistance in his power....to promote the opening of such trade to his port',<sup>(19)</sup> As a consequence of this a small joint Stock Company was founded at Calcutta for the trade with Egypt. Its capital was 3,000 Rupees divided into 100 shares<sup>(20)</sup> Three managers were appointed, sharing 5% on the purchase of goods, and 2% upon the sales of merchandise returns from the 'Gulfs' or 1% for the payment of Bullion in return<sup>(21)</sup> Each manager was to hold two shares. The dividends of the returns were to be divided among the subscribers,<sup>(22)</sup> a majority of whom form a 'Committee' to supervise the work of the managers<sup>(23)</sup> who were to begin in January 1773 to make the necessary investment of goods to be ready in November<sup>(24)</sup> For the journey a vessel of 400 or 500 tons and a small one of 150 'Bombay or Surat built' were needed.<sup>(25)</sup> Hastings was asked to be 'the founder and father of the cause'

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18. Cal.Per.Corresp.IV.121. Two letters from Hastings to Ali Beck of Egypt. on 31 Dec.

19. B.M.Add.MSS.,2921c,f.428-29 'Proposals for a commerce to Suez'.

20. B.M.Add.MSS.,29210 F.426

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.



and 'to give leave for his name to be inserted as such',<sup>(26)</sup> Moreover, he appointed the managers who were Captain Thornhill, Robert Halford and David Killican. The Company was given the name of 'Suez adventure'. And adventure it indeed was! As far as the navigation of the Northern part of the Red Sea was concerned, the East India Company and its servants were the least informed. Henry Tistew, who had formerly been British consul at Tripoli in Syria, was one of the very few Englishmen who made his way down the Red Sea and thence to Surat in 1698. Probably there can be no better example of British ignorance of the navigation of the Red Sea than the suggestion made to Hastings by the new Company 'to ask Ali Bey to send a small tender and two long boats with an expert in surveying to hold the Indian ships on their visits to Suez, at least for the first year',<sup>(27)</sup>

While this arrangement was being made in India, a new coup d'etat occurred in Egypt after which Mehemet Bey Abu El Dahab became the 'new despot'. It was about that time, January 1773, that James Bruce reached Cairo.<sup>(28)</sup> He had a very interesting interview with Mehemet Bey. As Yagoub el Hakim (as the Bey used to call him), he ingratiated himself with the Bey and

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26. Ibid. F. 428-9.

27. Ibid.

28. Bruce, IV, 718.

discussed the desire of English merchants 'brave, rich and honest' to trade directly between India and Egypt. The Bey, impelled probably by the same views as his predecessor, granted in February 1773 a Firman<sup>(29)</sup> admitting the English ships to Suez on payment of 8% customs duty, instead of the 14% usually levied at Judda, and fifty 'Patacka' for each ship to the Commandant at Suez, in respect of anchorage. Beside providing for securities against molestation and for presents, the Firman permitted the English merchants to trade in Cairo 'for money or barter as suits (them) best'.... Almost immediately after the Firman was issued, Bruce communicated it to the Governors of Bombay and Bengal and to Captains Thornhill and Price, enclosing a letter from the chief of the customs in Egypt.<sup>(30)</sup> Obviously the Firman was considered as preliminary to another agreement, for Bruce concluded his letter to Thornhill by advising him against bringing 'any produce of Arabia, at least the first voyage, till you make your terms here.'<sup>(31)</sup> The managers of the 'Suez Adventure' chose John Shaw and Captain William Greig to undertake the voyage from Calcutta to Egypt and conclude the treaty with the Bey. Shaw was to have the management of the cargo, and Captain Greig the entire management of the navigation of the vessels. They were to receive 5% on sales (3% for Shaw and 2% for Greig). One-sixth of the cargo was to be allowed as privilege in lieu of which 12,000 rupees, would be divided between them and the officers. The vessels

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29. Ibid. I. Appendix CCXCIX -CCCL.

30. Ibid. VI. P.534-8.

31. Ibid.



were the Bengal Merchant, and the Cuddalore Schooner, under Captain Wedderburn, which was 'granted by the Governor (Hastings) to the proprietors as tender' to assist in the discovery of the passage to Suez. Shaw was selected to negotiate with the Bey, in an embassy 'brilliant and respectable',<sup>(32)</sup> Contrary to the assertion of Charles Roux, the Bey's Firman was not enthusiastically received in India. 'Much disappointment has however resulted from a perusal of the Firman from which it appears that a duty of 8% will be levied on all imports at Egypt' wrote Hastings to Mehemet Bey on 1st December 1773.<sup>(33)</sup> The Governor-General suggested the lowering of the duties to 5% and that was, in fact, the main proposal for the new treaty which Shaw was sent to negotiate.<sup>(34)</sup> On the same day Hastings wrote another letter to Egypt informing the Bey of the departure of the vessels loaded with merchandise and presents including 'fine muslins, shawls, a hookah, a gun and a telescope'. Soon after the departure of these vessels, early in 1774, from Calcutta 'they were overtaken by a violent gale of wind in the bay' and the voyage was abandoned.<sup>(35)</sup>

The fact that Hastings addressed his two letters on 1st December 1773 to Ali Bey, although the Firman was signed by

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32. Ibid.VI.P.P.538-45, 'Copy of the instructions from the Manager of the Suez Adventure to Mr. John Shaw and Captain William Greig'.

33. Cal.Per.Corresp. IV. P.122(671).

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

Mehemet Bey, indicates that he was not aware of the new coup d'état in Egypt. What is more interesting, perhaps, is that Hastings at the beginning of 1774, being still unaware of the new change in Egypt, apparently thought that the 'Sultan of Egypt' held the name of 'Mehemet Ali', as is evident from his letter on 28th February 1774, telling of the misfortune of the vessels and promising to send another vessel in the next year. Professor Hoskins, inferred, obviously that the letter was addressed to Ali Bey and relates the misfortune of the vessels before the firman was issued.<sup>(36)</sup> However, at the beginning of 1775 the 'Minerva' was despatched from Bengal commanded by Captain Thornhill and Shaw, joint supercargoes who arrived at Cairo early in March and concluded a treaty<sup>(37)</sup> of commerce on the 7th of the same month, on behalf of the Governor-General.

In art.1, the treaty provided for free navigation and commerce between the subjects of both countries. The rest of the articles, dealt specifically with the regulation of British commerce in Egypt. Goods from Bengal and Madras were subject to 6½% duties; those from Surat and Bombay to 8%. Fifty 'Patacka' to be paid for anchorage and also small sums of money

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36. ~~Cal. For. Corresp. Vol. P. 6 p. 11. P. 11.~~

37. C.O., 77.25 & B.M. Add, MSS 29, 201 F, 11, 17, 14, 29, 21 of 341, 412, 422, 426, 30, 32.



to the Arabs of Tore, Suez and Cairo. In case of debt or crime, British merchants were to be tried by the Egyptian authorities according to the existing law, while cases of petty offences were to be decided by 'their chief residing at Cairo'. In case of the death of one of the merchants, his property would be delivered to his heirs. Two remarkable articles deal with the exemption of the British merchants from paying duties in the case of unsold goods in Egypt, and with the privilege of purchasing goods from Egypt duty-free. The transportation between Suez and Cairo would be at the risk of the Bey of Cairo. On arriving at Suez, the merchants had to acquaint the Bey by sending a manifest of their cargoes and a certificate signifying the place they came from and more particularly, to show their 'passports' to the Governor of Suez as proof that they were English subjects and 'proper merchants'. In Cairo goods would be taken to the merchants' own houses and customs' officers would be present at the unpacking and selling of the goods. Finally the treaty provided that, in case of a breach, a six months' ultimatum should be given to the subjects of either party residing in the dominions of the other.

The treaty establishes one prominent fact; that the British did not understand the Mamelukes. Theoretically one probably could not expect more than an exemption from paying duties in case of unsold British goods in Egypt, but practically

one might doubt the good faith of the ruling power of Egypt in respect of the treaty. It is remarkable how the British travellers of the period in Egypt (Taylor<sup>(38)</sup>, Irwin<sup>(39)</sup> and Baldwin<sup>(40)</sup> to mention a few names) were completely under an illusion about the respect that the Mamelukes paid to the British.

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1777 ?  
The treaty caused much concern in three places; London, Calcutta and Constantinople, and fruitless attempts were made to procure ratification of the treaty. Bruce on his arrival at London in (1747), managed to interview Lord North. 'The trade carried on there by Suez and the Isthmus, would not be of any advantage to the India Company, but rather a detriment to it. Such was the answer I got from Lord North'....wrote Bruce later in 1804. Disappointed as he might be, Bruce remarked that 'it seemed very strange, that considering the immense empire which belonged to Britain in the East Indies, the Company and their servants should be, to a man, so perfectly ignorant of the Red Sea and the ports in it, and so indifferent as to the

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38. H.M. 436(2) Taylor-Report to Abercrombie P.32.

39. P.383-5.

40. B.M.Add.MSS. 29,210. F.422 'The English enjoy a sort of predilection in the hearts destination of the Mamelukes...'

41. Bruce, VI. 212-514-3.

42. I.O. Office Records Vol. 691 'Records of the Mamelukes' 22-24. 1778.

43. Ibid. 4 Nov. 1778.



means of being better informed, a sea which washes the shores of their conquests, and came, at the same time, within two days' journey of the Mediterranean'.<sup>(41)</sup> In this he was right, for technically the treaty as such could not be detrimental to the India Company. As Philip Francis observed later in 1777 the Indian trade with Egypt was essentially the export trade to the 'Gulfs' and ultimately supplied the same markets...<sup>(42)</sup> and was 'not of the same assortments as those sent to Europe'.

In India Warren Hastings continued his support until 1778. The 'Bengal Public Consultations' records two attempts (1776-77) by Hastings to procure the approval of his Council to the trade. Here he was flatly opposed by Francis and Clavering. Francis could see no reason why the Company itself could not undertake this trade, 'if....it should appear to be attended with advantages'.<sup>(43)</sup> Clavering refuted Hastings' argument that the trade could be of any benefit to the inhabitants of Bengal: 'Although this trade to the Gulfs' he said to the Council, 'had been very advantageous to Bengal, and would continue to be so were the trade carried on as formerly by native merchants, whose acquisition in specie or in raw materials for manufacture would still enrich the country where

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41. Bruce, VI. P.P.534-5.

42. I.O. Marine Records Misc. 891 'Extract of Bengal Consultations' 28 Aug. 1778.

43. Ibid. 4 Nov. 1776.

they resided, but the commerce in this period was carried on by English merchants to those countries. However lucrative it might have been to them (it) was generally only used in the means of a remittance of their own fortunes and could not of course contribute to the benefit of Bengal from whence manufactures are extracted, and not repaid by any return...'

Summing up his argument, Clavering declared that 'if there be but a doubt of the prejudice, which may arise to the Company's sales by opening a trade with Suez, I think it would be most advisable for the government not to take any active part in it, till the Company can have time to consider its probable effects, and to give us their orders upon it'.<sup>(44)</sup> On 8th August 1777, Hastings, failing to persuade the Council to approve the 'projected' trade, promised to raise the question again<sup>(45)</sup>, but he appears never to have done so. There is every reason, however, to believe that Hastings gave his support to the trade up to 1779<sup>(46)</sup>.

Constantinople was fully engaged in the war with Russia (1768-1774), and the critical position of the Porte during this time absorbed all its attention. The war ended with the treaty of Kinarji, 1774, most humiliating to the Porte, and fraught with the greatest peril to its Empire in the future, a

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44. Ibid. 8 Aug, 1777.

45. Ibid.

46. H.M. 145(13) P.459. Hastings to the Court of Directors, 14 Jan. 1780.



fact which might have urged the Porte into an obstinate policy of a 'status quo' of the Empire. Naturally the Porte reviewed the British activities in Egypt with no little apprehension. As pointed out before it had always been the policy of the Ottoman Empire to prohibit the navigation of the Christians beyond Judda. The Porte justified its policy, officially, by declaring that the 'Sea of Suez is designed for the noble pilgrimage of Mecca, and to let Frank ships navigate therein, is betraying the cause of the religion.....'(47) One might doubt whether Islam was more 'profaned' by the English ships coming into Suez, than it was by those going to Judda. The Ottoman policy with regard to this question was based upon three arbitrary factors. In the first place, the Porte was almost deprived 'de facto' of duties collected in the semi-independent province of Egypt. In the second place, trade, being restricted to Judda, was a factor of prosperity to the Hijaz, and the Porte was dependent on these duties to defray the expenses that were incurred at Medina and Mecca.(48) In the third place the Porte was only too aware that this system of trade would increase the revenues of the Mamelukes and thus assist them in strengthening their independence of the Porte. 'The most

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47. S.P. 97.53. Presentation from the Ottoman Porte to His Britannick Majesty's Ambassador. 5 May 1777.

48. S.P. 97.52. Ainslie to Weymouth, 3 June 1776.

weighty of all' wrote the British Ambassador to his Government, 'originates in the jealousy of this Court at the growing power of the Beys, and his apprehensions lest the Province of Egypt should become independent'.<sup>(49)</sup>

When the first British ship carrying Thornhill and Shaw arrived at Suez, the Sherif of Mecca complained to the Porte, who immediately presented a memorandum to John Murray, the British Ambassador, remonstrating on the arrival of the ship and calling it an 'innovation'.<sup>(50)</sup> At the same time the Porte sent a Firman to the Government of Egypt to prevent the English ships from anchoring at Suez, or alternatively to confiscate their cargo, and 'imprison all persons on board'.<sup>(51)</sup> It does not appear, however, that the British Ambassador even communicated the Porte's memorandum to his government. He rejected the Porte's demand on the ground that it was a violation of the Capitulations which granted British subjects<sup>(52)</sup> the entire freedom to trade in the Grand Seigneur's dominions. The Porte repeated its request to Murray's successor, Anthony Hayes, Charge d'Affaires (October 1775-June 1776) asking the British Government to give orders to prevent the sailing of these ships.<sup>(53)</sup> Hayes, though taking the same attitude as

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49. Ibid. Hayes to Weymouth 3 Jan. 1776.

50. I.O.F.R. 'Egypt & the Red Sea' V. Baldwin to the Court of Directors, 19 February 1784.

51. S.P. 97.51. Firman to the Government of Egypt (Italian text) 1774, & James Capper, P.VIII & Charles Roux 'L' et le Canal de Suez' Annexe 3, P.417.

52. I.O.F.R. V. Ainslie to P. Mitchell, 17 June 1779.

53. S.P. 97.51. Hayes to Weymouth 3 Jan. 1776.



Murray nevertheless communicated the Porte's demand to Lord Weymouth, the Secretary of State. In point of fact, the Porte's protests would have been fruitless for so long as the virtually independent Beys of Egypt encouraged the trade. As early as 1775, the Porte nominated Mehemet Bey as Pasha of Cairo, a position which would subject him to transfer to other provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Hayes was astute enough to realize that it was 'a political step of the Porte, who begins to grow jealous of his (Bey) power and abilities, but the Bey refused the honour politely to avoid a snare, that may soon prove his ruin in quitting Egypt'.<sup>(54)</sup> It was about that time that a new character appeared on the stage; George Baldwin.

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54. Ibid. 3 July 1775.

## CHAPTER VI.

The importance of Egypt on an envisaged new route to India.

George Baldwin had lived in Cyprus and at Acre during the years 1760-8 as a factor of the Levant Company, and, if his own testimony can be believed, he had even then resolved to reopen the Red Sea route to India and to further this end he had made preparations to proceed as a free mariner from Egypt to the East. The death of his brother, William, who was consul in Cyprus in 1771 and his appointment to succeed him, delayed the project for a time. It was not before the middle of 1773 that he could embark on his scheme and in the same year he arrived at Cairo where he revealed his plan to Mehemet Bey, who encouraged him to persevere, and, according to Baldwin's statement, said to him 'If you bring the Indian Ships to Suez, I will lay an aqueduct from the Nile to Suez and you shall drink of the Nile water'.<sup>(1)</sup> Baldwin went to Constantinople to announce his plan which was approved by John Murray. In March 1773 he resigned<sup>(2)</sup> his consulship and twelve months later was back in Egypt, endeavouring to embark at Suez for India, but various obstacles hindered him, and at last his patience failed, 'thirty days elapsed, my provisions were exhausted, my spirits impatient; the desert barren, indeed of all resource'<sup>(3)</sup> and he returned to England.

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1. Baldwin, Political recollection relative to Egypt P.P.4-6.
  2. S.P.105. 119. The Levant Company to pro-consul Smith at Aleppo, 16 August 1771 & Ibid 120. Company to Baldwin 15 Dec. 1772.
  3. Baldwin, Political.....P.P.4-6.



No sooner had he left, than Shaw arrived at Suez to conclude the treaty with Mehemet Bey, Baldwin, then resolved immediately to return to Egypt, and offered his services as an agent for facilitating despatches between England and India through Egypt, to the Court of Directors. Indeed the struggle between the English and the French settlements in India, the schemes of Duplex, the achievements of Clive, the vigorous policy of Warren Hastings, the vital question whether India and its trade was to be controlled from Paris or London, demanded swifter communication than the Cape of Good Hope could provide. Secondly, the overland route through Basra, Bagdad and Aleppo, that is the third possible channel for British communications, had been threatened in the 18th century by the piracy in the Persian Gulf and the constant war between the Afghans and the Persians on one hand and the Turks and the Persians on the other.<sup>(4)</sup> This journey was very arduous and constantly subjected to the sudden depredations of the Arabs along the route.<sup>(5)</sup> As early as November 1773 the Company was informed about the projected trade through Warren Hastings, who pointed out, as well the advantages of 'new and continual communication of letters with the Honourable Court in England'.<sup>(6)</sup> The Company approved of making over the use of the Cuddalore Schooner to the 'Suez Adventure' Company to help in the voyage. 'We judge' says their reply, 'that a knowledge of this

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4. Wilson, The Persian Gulf, P.P.174-5.

5. Dodwell, The founder of Modern Egypt, P.4.

6. I.O.Marine Records 891. 'Extract of Bengal Public Consultations' 18 Nov. 1773.

sort could not fail of being useful to the Honourable Company'.<sup>(7)</sup> It appears that Hastings considered this to imply sufficient sanction for his subsequent furthering of the project. No wonder, then, that the Court of Directors approved immediately of Baldwin's offer and promised to reimburse him for every reasonable expense.<sup>(8)</sup> Baldwin arrived at Cairo sometime in September 1775.

The year 1775 saw two important events, as far as the Indian trade to Egypt was concerned, which tended slowly probably, but nevertheless, naturally, to confine the question to London and Constantinople alone; the first was the death of Mehemet Bey early in the year, and the second was the appointment of Sir Robert Ainslie in September as the British Ambassador to Constantinople.

With the death of Mehemet Bey, a period of anarchy and maladministration began in Egypt (1775-98). The main causes were the conflict among the Mamelukes for power, and the economic decadence of the country. From 1775 to 1779 a struggle took place between Ismail Bey, representative of the faction of Ali Bey, on the one hand, and Ibrahim and Murad, Beys, representatives of the faction of Mehemet Bey, on the other, a tension which ended in 1779 with Ibrahim and Murad seizing control of the government, and sharing between

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7. Ibid. 'General letter from Bengal' 15 March 1774.

8. I.O.F.R. 'Egypt & the Red Sea' V. Mitchell to Baldwin 10 June 1775.



themselves the 'Government of Cairo' and the 'Imarat el-Hajj'; 'superintendence of Pilgrimage'. The economic disintegration of the country was due, in the first place to persistent change of native currency and the influx of good foreign silver or golden currency which the 'Franks' brought with them.<sup>(9)</sup> In the second place, the failure of the Nile flood, the neglect of canals and irrigation in general caused the breakdown of agriculture, with its obvious results. In a country where struggles within the ruling class were constantly taking place, there was very little hope for established commerce. Of the Mamelukes it may be said that 'ignorant and superstitious by training, the frequent murders rendered them ferocious, the tumults seditions, the cabals perfidious, the dissimulation cowardly and the unnatural vices corrupt'.<sup>(10)</sup> Their road to honour was defection, their title to power, assassination and a contempt of death. Power had no other end than procuring women, horses, jewels and retainers. Their 'primum mobile' was gold and it had to be obtained by every conceivable means. Europeans and Levantine merchants in the 18th century were

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9. The 'Real d'Espagn' and the 'Venetian Sequin' were the best currency in the Ottoman Empire; see Vensleb 'Nouvelle relation en forme de journal d'un voyage en Egypte'. Paris 1698. The tribute was sent to Constantinople, in 1647 and 1672, in foreign currency. Monconys' journal des voyages de Monsieur de Monconys' Part 1 Lyon 1665. See also 'Precis de l'histoire d'Egypte' Vol.III, P.P.81-90 by Etienne Combe. A list of the specie used in Egypt in 17th and 18th centuries is in Norden 'Travels in Egypt' P.42. See also Pococke Vol. 1.

10. Ghorbal, P.2.

full of complaints against fanaticism and maltreatment by Mamelukes. It probably never occurred to them that the poor Egyptian peasant was subjected to the same treatment and pillage. The tragedy of the whole affair is that the British Government in settling the Egyptian question in the summer of 1801, ignored the 18th century background of Mameluke history, a factor which might have helped them to assess the Mamelukes' true character.

The hostile attitude of Robert Ainslie, the newly-appointed Ambassador at Constantinople, to the question of Indian trade with Egypt, has never been fully appreciated by the very few who have dealt with the subject. 'Ainslie took a sympathetic attitude towards the Turks partly because of personal dislike to Baldwin, whom he suspected of advancing his own interests at the expense of the Crown, and the East India Company, and partly because of his belief that he understood the sentiment both of the Home Government and the two trading companies concerned,'<sup>(11)</sup> writes Professor Hoskins. In the first place there is not the slightest evidence of misunderstanding between Ainslie and Baldwin before the end of 1778. In the second place, the attitude of the Home Government and the East India Company was mainly determined by Ainslie himself. Sir R. Ainslie considered

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the development of the Indian trade to Egypt as a serious menace to the Levant Company whose representative he was.<sup>(12)</sup> For the Levant Company, since the beginning of the 17th century, had been exporting to the Porte's dominions large quantities of oriental goods, particularly muslin, brought to England by the East India merchants.<sup>(13)</sup> Ainslie was apprehensive that the continuation of this trade, in disregard of the requests of the Porte, might be followed by retaliation by the Porte against the merchants of the Levant Company and their properties. 'The trade carried on in English ships' he wrote to Weymouth, 'between the East India Company's settlements and the port of Suez in the government of Egypt becomes more and more considerable, this gives much offence at the Porte, and I am afraid, my Lord, may be productive of some act of resentment on their part, detrimental to the commercial interests of His Majesty's subjects trading to the Levant'.<sup>(14)</sup> In the memorandum of 5 May 1777, the Porte urged Ainslie 'to write to his Court with earnestness upon this particular, and to employ his diligence in preserving the constant friendship of these two Courts, on that footing upon which it had hitherto existed'.<sup>(15)</sup> Thirdly, he believed that this trade 'carried on by private adventurers of different nations, in its present situation,

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12. S.P. 97.53. Ainslie to Weymouth 18 March 1777.

13. S.P. 97.53. Ainslie to Weymouth 3 May 1777.

14. Ibid.

15. S.P. 97.53. Representation from the Ottoman Porte to His Britannick Majesty's Ambassador - 5 May 1777 & I.O. Marine Records Misc. 891.

must more or less hurt the interests of the East India Company at large, by interfering with their sales at home, at least for the consumption of this Empire'.<sup>(16)</sup>

Lastly, the high duties paid by these merchants were considered by Ainslie as an act of infraction of the 'Sacred Capitulations' and 'would cause a new regulation which may be developed into a tradition'.<sup>(17)</sup> In the 18th century, Ottoman diplomatic relations and dealings with foreign countries were conducted through their accredited representatives, and in many cases these representatives were held personally responsible for the behaviour of their countrymen.

Between March and June, Ainslie's reports to the Home Government challenged its indifference and had the effect of alarming the East India Company. The reports of Ainslie, however, stirred the East India Company to the action of sending orders to the Company's settlements in India prohibiting all British subjects from trading in the Red Sea at any ports other than Judda and Mocha. 'We cannot but be justly alarmed' run the orders, 'at a trade of this nature which in its consequences may not only involve the British Nation in disputes with the Sublime Porte, but also be highly prejudicial to the trade of the East India Company here'. The fact that the Company did not examine the possibilities and the probable

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16. S.P. 97.53. Ainslie to Weymouth 18 March 1777.

17. S.P. 97.54. Ainslie to Baldwin 27 January 1778.



results of the projected trade proves that its attitude was due mainly to Ainslie's speculation on the question. The orders of the Company pointed out clearly that 'whatever cargoes may be henceforward sent from India, and imported at Suez, will be immediately confiscated'.<sup>(18)</sup> But as some ships might have already left India for Suez before the orders of the Court of Directors could reach the authorities there, Weymouth instructed Ainslie to request the Porte not to take any hostile measures against British vessels before May 1778.<sup>(19)</sup> At the same time, Ainslie was asked to secure for the East India Company the privilege of transmitting the despatches between India and England through Suez. 'This point' writes Weymouth, 'is of so much importance to the Company, that I must in the most particular manner recommend it to your attention'.<sup>(20)</sup> Towards the end of 1777 and at the beginning of 1778, Ainslie's efforts at the Ottoman Court were directed, as far as Egypt was concerned to procure the Porte's approval to the two (previous) requests of the British Government. Certain factors, however, -the French intrigues, and the increasing Indian trade to Suez rendered the Porte more hostile- contributed to the weakening of British interests in Egypt. At the same time Baldwin was able to convince the Company of the importance of the agency in Egypt.

Baldwin was an agent of the East India Company and a factor of the Levant Company. In the first place his work was primarily to facilitate the transit of despatches through

18. I.O. Marine Records Misc.891 'Extract of Court's General Letter to Bengal'. 4 July 1777.

19. S.P. 97.53. Weymouth to Ainslie 11 July 1777.

20. Ibid.

Egypt, but there is every reason to believe that he was personally involved in the 'illicit trade'. In the second place, he attempted to develop trade between England and Egypt, in spite of the arbitrary attitude of the Levant Company. This Company had been prejudiced against such commerce since the first half of the 18th Century, for it had proved to be a failure owing to the unsettled political conditions in Egypt.<sup>(21)</sup> John Murray, at the beginning of 1776 tried to establish a consulate in Egypt and was flatly opposed by the Company.<sup>(22)</sup> Failing in this, he sent letters to the 'Daghanier of Cairo', Anton Cassis, empowering him to protect, and act, for English merchants in Egypt.<sup>(23)</sup> The Company disavowed the action, but the 'Daghanier' remained in his position, refusing to be directed by any other authority except the British Ambassador. It would appear that Anton Cassis laid heavy impositions on English Merchants for in January 1777, Baldwin wrote to Ainslie asking him to write to the 'Daghanier' 'begging him not to exact any further duties from the English subjects'.<sup>(24)</sup> In June Baldwin repeated his request, repudiating 'the most fallacious notion that ever was conceived' namely 'the impossibility of establishing an advantageous commercial

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21. S.P.97.53. Ainslie to Baldwin 27 January 1778.

22. I.O.F.R. 'Egypt & the Red Sea' V. Baldwin to the Court of Directors 19 February 1784.

23. S.P.97.53. Baldwin to Ainslie 22 Jan. 1777.

24. Ibid.



intercourse with Egypt'.<sup>(25)</sup> He went further and asked the Levant Company to appoint him as a consul in Cairo.<sup>(26)</sup> The Company, in reply, refused because 'it is not for our interest to have a consul there',<sup>(27)</sup> an explanation which, doubtless was correctly amplified by Ainslie, when he wrote, because of 'the turbulence of the government of Egypt which forbids them of appointing consuls and exposing themselves to heavy losses by *Avanias*'.<sup>(28)</sup>

English trade in Egypt seems to have gained little by Baldwin's efforts. In 1778 he claimed that in two years he had freighted fifteen ships and imported £20,000 worth of goods from London;<sup>(29)</sup> but he had a case to state, and the report of the Levant Company made in 1790 hardly bears out his picture of the profitable possibilities of commercial expansion in Egypt.<sup>(30)</sup> This report stated that, owing to the disturbed condition of the country, and the insecurity of life and property, there was little direct trade between England and Egypt. English merchants in the Levant carried on an indirect trade, through Leghorn and Smyrna, with Alexandria. According to Browne the consumption of English broadcloth in Egypt before 1792 was only about 800 bales

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25. S.P.97.53. Baldwin to Ainslie 24 June 1777.

26. S.P.97.54. Ainslie to Baldwin 27 Jan. 1778.

27. Ibid. Baldwin to Ainslie 20 February 1778.

28. Ibid. Ainslie to Baldwin 27 Jan. 1778.

29. I.O.F.R. 'Egypt & the Red Sea' V. Speculation on the situation and resources of Egypt'. & Baldwin, Political Recollections...etc. P.P.4-6.

30. F.O.78. Turkey 11. Memorandum of the Lords of the Committee for trade, October 19, 1790. & in B.M.Add. MSS.38394 P.P. 80-97.

per annum.<sup>(31)</sup> The following figures taken from the Company's composition books serve to show the relative low ebb of British trade with Egypt.<sup>(32)</sup>

| <u>Year.</u> | <u>No of ships on which impositions were paid.</u> | <u>Ports of origin.</u>                                                                       |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1776         | 24                                                 | 15 from Smyrna, 5 from Scanderoon, 2 from Salonika, 2 from Turkey (port not specified).       |
| 1777         | 22                                                 | 16 from Smyrna, 3 from Turkey, 2 from Scanderoon, 1 from Salonika.                            |
| 1785         | 21                                                 | 18 from Smyrna, 2 from Salonika, 1 from Scanderoon and Cyprus.                                |
| 1790         | 29                                                 | 22 from Smyrna, 3 from Salonika, 2 from Constantinople, 1 from Alexandria, 1 from Scanderoon. |

(In the period 1777-85) only one ship was entered in the Company's register book).

As an agent of the East India Company, Baldwin considerably facilitated the transit of despatches brought from India by the Dolphin sloop in January 1776,<sup>(33)</sup> and in releasing the detained passengers of the Swallow sloop,<sup>(34)</sup> (Dalrymple, Copper, Dighton) in January 1777. On the 17th of April 1778, he received unofficial news of the outbreak of hostilities between France and England, during the American War of Independence, and, without hesitation, he despatched

31. P.10.

32. S.P.105.170 & 171.

33. I.O.F.R. 'Egypt & the Red Sea' V. 'Proceedings at the General Quarterly Court of the E.I.C.' 26 March 1783.

34. Ibid. Baldwin to the Proprietors of the E.I. Stock' 15 June 1783.



it at his own expense, to India where it arrived a month before the official despatch, an act of foresight which was responsible in no small measure for the fall of Pondichery.<sup>(35)</sup> This incident strongly confirmed the importance of the Company's agency in Egypt.<sup>(36)</sup>

I have not been able to find the specific part played by Baldwin in the 'illicit trade', but from all the material at hand the events of 1779 prove that he was deeply involved. Charles Roux is somewhat harsh on Baldwin,<sup>(37)</sup> there is no doubt that the latter viewed the matter in the national interest. He was alive to the probability that France might wrest Egypt from the 'degenerated Ottoman Empire' in order to rival England in world commerce or at least in India. If that were ever to happen, Baldwin believed that 'England would hold her possessions in India at the mercy of France'.<sup>(38)</sup> Here we find an odd example of an 18th century Englishman calling for a 'forcefull footing' for England in Egypt. He believed that the Porte, because of its merely nominal sovereignty over Egypt, could not prevent the Indian trade as long as the Beys encouraged it.<sup>(39)</sup> On the other hand, he was fully conscious of the fact that these Beys would not allow such line of transport to be opened for despatches only.<sup>(40)</sup> These

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35. I.O.F.R. Ibid. Communication with India....etc

36. Ibid. Proceedings of the General Quarterly Court of the E.I.C. 26 March 1783.

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38. I.O.F.R. Ibid. Speculation on the situation & resources of Egypt by Baldwin & Political Recollection...etc P.P.4-6.

39. Ibid. The Communication with India...etc by Baldwin.

40. S.P.97.53. Baldwin to Ainslie 22 January 1777.

passengers with unknown papers on their persons, if not raising the Beys' suspicions as to their intentions, were certainly not worth while involving them in trouble with the Porte. Ibrahim Bey expressed to Baldwin 'a great surprise that a large ship should come to Suez on purpose to land three passengers only'.<sup>(41)</sup> Indeed it was difficult to convince an 18th century 'Egyptian Mameluke that English merchants did not come from the Diamond country and must necessarily have treasures with them'.<sup>(42)</sup>

In 1778 Baldwin's prestige was declining. First, the war between England and France made British trade in the Levant a perilous undertaking. The following figures of the amount of Indian goods exported from England to Turkey show this decline during the period.<sup>(43)</sup>

| <u>Year.</u> | <u>Bales.</u> |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1774         | 145           |
| 1775         | 229           |
| 1776         | 317           |
| 1777         | 264           |
| 1778         | 74            |
| 1779         | 4             |
| 1780         | 5             |
| 1781         | 6             |
| 1782         | 5             |

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41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. I.O.F.R. Ibid. 'The Communication with India....etc by Baldwin.



Secondly, Baldwin was not paid enough by the East India Company to support his establishment in Egypt.<sup>(44)</sup> In fact he was paid £414 per annum for his services, and £600 in Dec. 1777 for extraordinary expenses.<sup>(45)</sup> He complained in Sept. 1777~~7~~ and in May 1778 to the Court of Directors, but to no effect; consequently, his financial position, particularly after his considerable expenditure on the despatch of the news of war, became almost critical. In June he intimated to the Court that unless it would guarantee an adequate discharge of his disbursements and a sufficient compensation for the extraordinary expenses he would resign.<sup>(46)</sup> The company replied by offering him £500, which he considered grossly inadequate;<sup>(47)</sup> the developement of the situation in 1779 overwhelmed him financially.

French ambitions and activities in Egypt in the 17th and 18th centuries have been fully studied by M. Charles-Roux in his '*Les Origines de l'expédition Egyptienne*' and '*L'histoire de l'Isthme et le Canal de Suez*'. Since Leibnitz had laid his project before Louis XIV, French schemes for the possession of Egypt had been constantly nurtured and Egypt was naturally involved in the question of the partition of the

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44. Ibid. The Humble petition of G. Baldwin.

45. Ibid. 'Proceedings of the General Quarterly Court of the E.I.C. 26 March 1783.

46. Ibid. 'Extracts of Minutes of the Court of Directors respecting Mr. Baldwin'.

47. Ibid.

Ottoman Empire. Most of these projects, collected diligently by Djuvara, assign Egypt to France. In point of fact, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire during the 17th and the first half of the 18th century, was more apparent than real.

The Court of Versailles was kept informed of the British activities in Egypt, by the French consuls in Cairo, in what were called 'Rapports au Roi', Mure wrote to the Chambre de Commerce on 15th March 1776, drawing its attention to the fact that 'English Operations in this part should deserve much more of our attention to the point, whether they could open in Egypt a market that might prove to be of much importance to them as well as to us'.<sup>(48)</sup> In October 1777 Consul Taitbout asserted that in that winter more than twenty English ships had arrived via Suez and made a profit of over 120% on Indian merchandise.<sup>(49)</sup> In fact, these consuls were under the false impression that the British Government had some designs on Egypt. Officers of the East India Company were belived to be 'Geographical engineers' 'drawing the plans of the principal towns and maps of the Red

48. Arch.Aff. Correspondence consulaire, Alexandrie et le Caire; cited in Charles-Roux, l'Isthme et le Canal de Suez, P.P.102-3.

49. Ibid.



Sea...since the outbreak of the War of American Independence'. This misconception was probably responsible for a popular rumour that England would seek in Egypt an indemnity for her losses in America. A careless remark, probably from Baldwin, gave rise to a French Consul's report that 'within four years Egypt will no longer belong to the Turks'.<sup>(50)</sup> Nothing in fact was more absurd than the angry exchanges between the French and the English representatives in Egypt with regard to the high policies of their respective nations. The weakness of Baldwin's position lay in the disparity between his vigorous attitude and the indifference of his government.

In France, few people in the second half of the 18th century remained faithful <sup>to</sup> ~~for~~ the policy of Choiseul.<sup>(51)</sup> In 1777 Baron de Tott was charged with an important mission. He had served at Constantinople during the last Turko-Russian War and, as soon as the treaty of Kainordji permitted him to return to Paris, he presented a report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1776 on the political state of Turkey.<sup>(52)</sup> Tott did not favour the policy of diplomatic or military intervention on behalf of the Ottoman Empire since its fall

50. Ibid.

51. Charles-Roux, Ibid. P.103.

52. Ibid. P.104.

seemed to be inevitable. To assure for France a pre-eminent position which would give her the power of competing with the new masters of Constantinople, Egypt should be seized. It was suggested, then, that the Baron should go on a tour, ostensibly to visit the ports of the Levant, but in fact to investigate the conditions in Egypt. In June he reached Alexandria. In Cairo, after a misunderstanding with the Beys of Egypt, de Tott declared in the name of the King of France the transference of the general consulate to Alexandria. However, the French did not quit Cairo completely: 'Le succès des Anglais dans la navigation de la mer Rouge doit nous inciter, à suivre leur exemple. Il est un motif de plus <sup>pour</sup> ne pas abandonner absolument nos établissements du Caire'. De Tott went to Smyrna where he submitted his report to the Ministry of Marine, urging the conquest of Egypt. The report dealt with the actual state of affairs in Egypt, its physical geography, its commerce, and lastly, the economic and political advantages, that France would obtain by conquest. De Tott considered Egypt as an ideal colony. 'Le terre promise de la colonisation Française'.<sup>(53)</sup>

Ainslie watched the French activities with unconcealed

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53. Ibid.



anxiety,<sup>(54)</sup> but what he failed to realise was that these movements were the outcome of more ambitious projects than the mere procuring of the Indian trade through Egypt. These activities complicated the whole question and made Indian communication through Egypt hardly tolerable as far as the Porte was concerned.

Since August 1777, Ainslie had endeavoured to procure the Porte's consent to the transit of despatches, and its permission to allow British ships from India to anchor at Suez up to the end of 1778.<sup>(55)</sup> The first request met with a definite refusal. As late as November, the only concession that Ainslie could obtain was a proposal made by the Porte that despatches could come to Judda on English ships and from there on Turkish ones, to Suez, where the authorities would send them to Cairo.<sup>(56)</sup> The question of the despatches was carried no further. With regard to the second request, Ainslie, in December 1777, was able to secure the Porte's consent, after warning the Vizier of the possibility of English ships attacking Suez and that they might 'force every opposition'.<sup>(57)</sup> Orders were consequently sent to Egypt to allow English ships to come

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54. S.P.97.53. Ainslie to Weymouth 17 September 1777.

55. Ibid. 3 September 1777 & Ibid *Troduzzione della Porta, al Memoriale de Sua Eccellenza* dattata 26 Agosta 1777.

56. I.O.F.R. Ibid. Grand Signior to Ainslie 30 Nov. 1777 & *Marine Records Misc.* 891.

57. S.P.97.53. Ainslie to Weymouth 17 December 1777.

to Suez until December 1778.<sup>(58)</sup> However, no sooner had that permission been announced than British ships came in larger numbers to Suez and the Porte complained of what it called 'abuse of his consent'.<sup>(59)</sup>

The Indian trade to Egypt developed rapidly in the second half of 1778 and it appeared to have grown beyond the control of both the Porte and the Company. Ainslie, for his part, was fully conscious of the Porte's determination to stop the trade by every conceivable means. 'I heartily wish the orders sent out by the East India Company may be punctually obeyed, as it will be the means of preventing complains from the Grand Seigneur's ministers....' he wrote to his Government on 3rd August 1778.<sup>(60)</sup> He made Baldwin his 'Vekil' (deputy) in Egypt after giving him orders to refrain from encouraging the sailing of the British ships into Suez.<sup>(61)</sup> Furthermore, he asked the Porte to extend the prohibition to the flags of all Christian Powers.<sup>(62)</sup> He even attempted to persuade the Porte to lower the duties on goods imported from India to Basra, and to facilitate the transport from there to Aleppo in order to discourage the navigation to Suez, but he soon

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58. Ibid. Letter from the Grand Vizier Derendili Meher Pasha to the Governor of Cairo, 21 Dec. 1777 & I.O.F.R. Ibid & Marine Records Misc. 891.

59. S.P.97.54. Ainslie to Weymouth 4 May 1778 & Ibid Ainslie to Weymouth 1 December 1778.

60. S.P.97.54. Ainslie to Weymouth 3 August 1778.

61. S.P.97.55. Ainslie to Baldwin 26 February 1779.

62. Ibid. Ainslie to the Court of Directors 4 June 1779.



abandoned the idea as 'it may border a discordant point between them (East India Company) and the Levant Company'.<sup>(63)</sup> On the 4th January 1779, he wrote to the Court of Directors 'I cannot determine how far the Ruling Beys attend to good policy, but am certain that this Court is determined to obstruct..the navigation of Christian ships in the Red Sea beyond Judda and Mocha'. The trade obviously continued after December 1778. Was Baldwin responsible for this? The answer is a decided affirmative. Not only was he convinced that the Porte had no power to implement the prohibition of the 'illicit trade' as long as the Beys were supporting it, but also he knew that the orders of the Court of Directors would not be obeyed, since so many servants, even the chiefs of each department in the Government of Bengal had a direct interest in it as being the only means left for them to transit their acquired fortunes to Europe'.<sup>(64)</sup> Here we find the beginning of the misunderstanding between Ainslie and Baldwin, for the latter's defence of the trade provoked the former's misgivings. Ainslie suspected that the merchants involved in this trade, or the 'knot of adventurers' as he termed them, were collaborating with the French to engage the

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63. Ibid. Ainslie to Weymouth 18 June 1779.

64. S.P.97.54. Baldwin to Ainslie 20 June 1778.

moneyed men in Bengal to enter in their schemes,<sup>(65)</sup> and that they were enlisting the support of the French Ambassador at Constantinople.<sup>(66)</sup>

On 17th December 1778, the Porte intimated to Ainslie that as the year was drawing to its conclusion, British ships at Suez as from January 1779 either <sup>under</sup> with English colours, or under those of any other Power, would be treated as 'rebels and pirates' and their goods confiscated for the benefit of the 'Miri'.<sup>(67)</sup> A few days later the Porte transmitted to Egypt the notorious 'Hatti Sherif' which empowered the confiscation of the cargoes and the imprisonment of the crew.<sup>(68)</sup> To ensure the execution of its orders, the Porte removed Ismail, the Pasha of Egypt, to the Pashalik of Judda 'merely because he could not obtain from the Beys the confiscation of the ships and cargoes lately arrived from India to Suez',<sup>(69)</sup> and appointed in his place a certain Ibrahim Pasha a 'man of great resolution, and from whom they expect more success'.<sup>(70)</sup> Apparently the Pasha was able to persuade the Arabs near Suez and Tor to co-operate by plundering the British caravans on their way to Cairo. The Mamelukes never hesitated in such cases to take their share of the plunder.

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65. S.P. 97.54. Ainslie to Weymouth 17 December 1778.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid. 'Miri' is the public treasury.

68. I.O.F.R. Ibid. Hatti Sherif addressed to the Government of Egypt & F.O. 78. Turkey I & Baldwin's Polit. Rec. P.P. 12-13.

69. S.P. 97.54. Ainslie to Weymouth 17 December 1778.

70. S.P. 97.55. Ainslie to Weymouth 17 July 1779.



The detention of Capts. Scott and Mills, both military officers, in April 1779 foreshadowed more serious measures.<sup>(71)</sup> In May, the St. Helena arrived at Suez under Danish colours with letters of recommendation to the Bey of Cairo from Warren Hastings and the goods reached Cairo safely.<sup>(72)</sup> A few weeks later (24th May) the Danish ship Nathalie arrived from India, and was permitted to disembark her cargo. But the British caravan accompanied by that of the Bey, which was sent to protect the British on their way to Cairo was suddenly attacked on 19th June, by both the Mamelukes and the Arabs. O'Donnell and Capt. Waugh returned to Suez, but of the rest of the caravan which attempted to proceed to Cairo, none survived except a certain St. Germaine.<sup>(73)</sup> However, O'Donnell subsequently ventured to go to Cairo and presented a memorandum to Ibrahim Bey on 18th of July, asking for the restoration of his goods which had been publicly sold at Suez.<sup>(74)</sup> The Bey in reply promised to send an army to recover the 'greatest part of the goods' and 'if no possibility remained of recovering them, you shall have the satisfaction by other means, or the customs on the goods from India in future shall be appropriated to make good the deficiency'.<sup>(75)</sup> But the promise was followed by the capture of the ships at Suez, the

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71. S.P.97.55. Baldwin to Ainslie 30 April 1779.

72. Ibid. Baldwin to Ainslie 30 July 1779.

73. Ibid. John O'Donnell to Ainslie 5 August 1779.

74. S.P.97.55. O'Donnell to Ibrahim Bey 18 July 1779 & I.O.F.R. Ibid.

75. S.P.97.55. Ibrahim Bey to O'Donnell 27 July 1779.

seizure of all English property, the arrest of all Englishmen, and the spread of general alarm that the English in Cairo were to be executed.<sup>(76)</sup>

The news of the incident was communicated to Ainslie on 5th July through his agent at Alexandria, Sig. Brandi,<sup>(77)</sup> and confirmed by Baldwin on the 30th of the same month.<sup>(78)</sup> This definitely put Ainslie in an awkward position, for he had agreed to the prohibition by force. Moreover, the Porte could not conceive 'on what grounds an English Ambassador would pretend to act in support of Danish property, that considering the circumstances the Danish Agent is the only person who could interfere'.<sup>(79)</sup> The Danish Agent, however, refused to do so. At last it was 'with infinite trouble and difficulty and indeed by mere dint of importunity' that Ainslie moved the Porte to order the Government of Egypt to release the English merchants with their goods.<sup>(80)</sup> Before this order reached Cairo, the authorities in Egypt, in consequence of an agreement between the Beys and the English merchants, and through the mediation of French and Venetian trading houses had set the merchants free, restored to them their ships with the crews, and returned to Moore his merchandise.<sup>(81)</sup>

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- 76. S.P.97.55. Baldwin and Skiddy to Ainslie 31 August 1779.
  - 77. S.P.97.55. Brandi to Ainslie 5 July 1779, & I.O.F.R.Ibid.
  - 78. Ibid.
  - 79. S.P.97.55. Ainslie to Baldwin 30 September 1779.
  - 80. Ibid. & I.O.F.R. 'A command from the Porte to the Bashar of Egypt, the Judge and the Sheik El Balad' 30 September 1779.
  - 81. S.P.97.55. Brandi to Ainslie 25 August 1779.



A written declaration was taken from the merchants that they would never claim damages or commit any act of hostility against Egypt, or even remonstrate to the Porte.<sup>(82)</sup> Baldwin and a certain Skiddy were kept as hostages for the observance of this arrangement.<sup>(83)</sup> Becoming impatient of waiting for the Porte's command, Baldwin managed to escape from Egypt on a French vessel destined for Smyrna.<sup>(84)</sup> While he was on his voyage, the Porte's order arrived, but the authorities in Cairo refused to release Skiddy because of Baldwin's escape and the attack of the released English vessels on Moslem traders in the Red Sea.<sup>(85)</sup> However, after a conference with the Reis Effendi, Ainslie procured another order which secured the release of Skiddy.<sup>(86)</sup>

It is obvious that the conspiracy had been carried out by the Pasha and the Arabs. The Beys through such action certainly checked a commerce from which they personally would most likely have profited; they could not resist, however, their instinct for deliberate plunder. Baldwin writing on the affair states: 'To people ignorant of Egyptian policy it may seem a paradox - but it is nevertheless too true; their maxim is to make the most of the day, and a booty of more

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82. S.P.97.55. Baldwin and Skiddy to Ainslie 31 August 1779.

83. Ibid.

84. S.P.97.55. Baldwin to Ainslie 24 November 1779.

85. Ibid. Ainslie to Weymouth 3 December 1779.

86. Ibid.

than half a million of dollars was temptation too strong to be sustained by a comparative view of future losses...'(87) It was a fatal blow to these merchants, as their losses amounted to £120,000,<sup>(88)</sup> O'Donnell's alone being approximately 150,000 dollars.<sup>(89)</sup> The shareholders in Bengal also were ruined. The event convinced Hastings of the determination of the Porte to obstruct the trade and consequently he withdrew his support. The Porte, being contented with the result, confirmed Ismail Pasha in the Government of Egypt 'in return for his successful attempt to obstruct the trade between India and Suez, and for engaging the Arabs to plunder the Caravan'.<sup>(90)</sup>

Baldwin accused the Venetian merchant, Carlo Rosetti of having a hand in the plunder of <sup>the</sup> British caravan,<sup>(91)</sup> but in view of two facts, namely, that Rosetti had proposed the scheme of Indian trade to Ali Bey, and that British travellers in Egypt, in the second half of the 18th century were the proteges of Rosetti, the allegation cannot be accepted unreservedly.<sup>(92)</sup>

The arrival of Baldwin at Constantinople at the beginning of 1780, marks a period of five months mutual

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87. S.P.97.55. Baldwin 'Narrative of facts to the Plunder of the English merchants by the Arabs and other subsequent outrages of the Government of Cairo in the course of the year 1779'.

88. S.P.97.55 & I.O.T.R. Ibid. O'Donnell to Ibrahim Bey 18 July 1779.

89. S.P.97.55. Ainslie to Weymouth 17 August 1779.

90. S.P.97.55. Ainslie to Weymouth 18 October 1779.

91. S.P.97.55. 'Narrative of facts....etc.

92. Rooke, H.P.103-4.



recrimination between him and Ainslie - Baldwin accused Ainslie of handing 'over to the justice of the Turks, English subjects' and considered this as 'renouncing our dearest privilege of the Capitulations'.<sup>(93)</sup> In point of fact, Baldwin, by these attacks, hoped to persuade Ainslie to remonstrate *with* to the Porte, either by asking for financial redress or for the legal opening up of the Route. In this way he sought to compensate himself and his partners for their losses.<sup>(94)</sup> Nothing materialised, however, for Ainslie was deeply pre-occupied with the notification of the navigation regulations for Warships and trading vessels in Ottoman Seas, a matter of great importance since England was at war with France<sup>(95)</sup> - Ainslie thought it sufficient merely to defend himself in the eyes of his Government, and to accuse Baldwin of associating with the French Ambassador.<sup>(96)</sup> Baldwin's attack must have been savage, as far as Ainslie was concerned, for on 3rd March the latter wrote to Hillsborough that Baldwin 'is a troublesome and very desperate man'.<sup>(97)</sup> On 4th April, he wrote again 'May I, my Lord, be allowed to say that your justice as well as your sentiments of benevolence are interested in supporting my cause, against the designs and machinations of this abominable man'.<sup>(98)</sup> The crisis, however, seems to have passed when the Foreign Secretary wrote to

93. F.O.78. Turkey I. Baldwin to the Cancellaria, 23 February 1780.

94. Ibid. Ainslie to Hillsborough, 3 March 1780.

95. Ibid. Ainslie to Hillsborough in February and March 1780.

96. Ibid. 3 March 1780.

97. Ibid.

98. 4 April 1780.

Ainslie that he was 'very glad to find that the trouble and vexations you had so long met with from the very extraordinary behaviour of Mr. Baldwin had subsided. Your conduct in that whole matter appears to have been proper'.<sup>(99)</sup>

The last fruitless attempt, during this period, to re-open the despatch route through Egypt, was made by Sir Thomas Rumbold, the Governor of Madras, and Sir Edward Hughes, Admiral of the Indian Navy. About the middle of 1780 these two sent Capt. Wooley with despatches to England via Suez, accompanied by three letters, one from Rumbold to Ibrahim Bey, and the other two from Sir Edward Hughes to the Pasha of Egypt, and the Sherif of Mecca respectively.<sup>(100)</sup> Capt. Wooley's packet boat was accompanied by the Frigate 'Coventry'. The letters in general made it clear that the Indian authorities had agreed to prohibit English trade beyond Judda. Furthermore Sir Edward Hughes promised to send His 'Majesty's warships' to prevent British merchant vessels from touching at Suez. But both Rumbold and Hughes proposed the re-opening of the route for despatches only. Probably because of contrary winds, Wooley was forced to land at Quseir<sup>(101)</sup> (a small port South of Suez) where he was arrested and sent to Cairo, with the consequence that the Coventry frigate opened fire

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99. Ibid. Hillsborough to Ainslie 27 March 1780.

100. Ibid.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid. Wooley to Ainslie & the Pasha of Egypt, 26 August 1780.



on Quseir, causing considerable damage.<sup>(103)</sup> Browne, who visited the place later in 1794, reported that Anti-British feeling was at its height.<sup>(104)</sup> Wooley was sent by the Pasha of Egypt to Constantinople where the hostile attitude of the Porte was aggravated not only by the bombardment of Quseir, but also by the measures taken by the British authorities in India to 'infringe the Rights of His Imperial Majesty, by negotiating with, and operating through his rebellious subjects (the Beys)',<sup>(105)</sup> a policy which had borne its fruit in the treaty of 1775. Ainslie promised to communicate the Porte's complaints to his Court, pleaded as excuse for the incident that it was an error committed by the newly-appointed Admiral of the 'India Seas' and secured the release of Wooley in August for a ransom of £150.<sup>(106)</sup> The sequence to this last failure to secure the re-opening of the route was the withdrawal of the British merchants from Cairo. A certain Richard Hughes settled there at the beginning of 1780 with a view to replace Baldwin in the Company's agency in Egypt, but though he remained in Cairo for two years the Company refused to recognize his position.<sup>(107)</sup>

The years 1780 and 1781 witnessed the check-mate of the British interests in Egypt. Developments between

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103. Capper, J. P.8.

104. P.36.

105. F.O.78. Turkey I. Ainslie to Hillsborough 17 August 1780.

106. Ibid. Ainslie to Grand Signior 30 August 1780.

107. I.O.F.R. Ibid. Hughes to the Court of Directors, 15 March 1781 & 3 September 1782.

1782 and 1784 as far as the overland route was concerned, made Egypt a centre of renewed interest, and possibly denote a landmark in British policy towards that country.



## CHAPTER VII.

International competition for trade via Egypt.

During 1780-1782 Sir R. Ainslie, depending on his friendship with Sulaiman Pasha, the Governor of Bagdad, attempted to develop the Basra route.<sup>(1)</sup> The news of the outbreak of War with Holland was sent to India via this route. Moreover French intrigues in Persia partly involving the Basra route directed British interest from Egypt to Persia.<sup>(2)</sup> This story, however, lies beyond the scope of this work.

While England and France were occupied in rivalry over Persian affairs, Austria seized the opportunity to engage in Indian trade to the Levant through Egypt. Baron Herbert, the Imperial Internuncio, suggested to the Emperor the establishment of a consulate in Cairo, at a time when the French, British and Venetian Consulates had been withdrawn. Consequently the Grand Customs Master, Anton Cassis, was made a consul of Austria<sup>(3)</sup> and given the right to correspond directly with the Emperor. Carlo Rossetti was drawn into the project to use his influence with the Beys.<sup>(4)</sup> Even the Imperial Internuncio was personally involved in the trade, his prospective profits being estimated at £50,000.<sup>(5)</sup> It was proposed that Baron Weisenburg; Grand Provost of Spire should visit Alexandria to investigate the

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1. F.O.78. Turkey 3. Ainslie's correspondence with Sulaiman Pasha.
  2. Ibid. Ainslie to Hillsborough 25 February 1782.
  3. Ibid. A letter from Alexandria to Ainslie 15 June 1782.
  4. Ibid. Richard Lee to Ainslie 3 August 1782.
  5. Ibid. Ainslie to Lord Grantham 26 August 1782.

lucrative possibilities of the trade.<sup>(6)</sup> In its final shape, the project was to bring the Indian trade by Suez to Trieste, where a banking House would finance it.<sup>(7)</sup> It was claimed that, through Austrian influence at Constantinople, a Firman was sent to Egypt, by which the Porte itself was answerable for all losses which might fall on Austrian subjects engaged in this trade.<sup>(8)</sup>

The scheme seems to have met with success, for in the winter of 1782 it was announced in Cairo that several Imperial vessels had sailed from Trieste and Leghorn for the East Indies to bring Indian goods to Suez.<sup>(9)</sup>

At first Ainslie does not appear to have been unduly worried about the Austrian activities; the Porte he argued would never approved 'manceuvres which tend visibly to confirm the absolute revolt of Egypt'.<sup>(10)</sup> Gradually, however, he became suspicious of the Porte's support of the project, and when in Dec. 1782, Richard Lee, the British Consul at Aleppo, communicated to him a counter-scheme to the Austrian project, he passed it on immediately to his Government. In fact it appears that Ainslie was tending to agree at last with the attitude of the Indian authorities towards Egypt, an attitude which had hitherto been the target of his

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6. Ibid.

7. Ibid. Lee to Ainslie 31 December 1782.

8. Ibid. A letter from Alexandria to Ainslie 15 June 1782.

9. Ibid. Lee to Ainslie 31 December 1782.

10. Ibid. Ainslie to Grantham 26 August 1782.



severe criticism.

Lee's scheme was based on the fact that since the Porte, which might well have consented to the Austrian project, had so negligible an influence in Egypt, the whole trade would never be carried out without the Bey's support. They, therefore, should be won over to destroy the whole project. 'I understand' he said, 'that the Porte has issued favourable commands for the carrying on this trade, which, indeed, I am not surprised at, for her influence is so very feeble in Egypt that with or without Commands, Rosetti and the Customs Master might carry their schemes into execution, except they Beys could be so indisposed against them as to endanger their safe , and oblige them to fly the country, which perhaps would be the only effectual means of nipping in the bud their grand plans, the success of which must be highly prejudicial to the interests of England and of the East India Company in particular. The riches and tyranny of the Custom Master, occasion many enemies in Egypt, so, that by dint of money, his and Rosetti's overthrow might be effected. If it could be done for £15 or £20,000 the purchase might be esteemed a very cheap one to the East India Company, which will suffer immensely by the success of Rosetti's plans'.<sup>(11)</sup>

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11. Ibid. Lee to Ainslie 1782.

British anxiety, however, was not protracted.

In January 1784 Anton Cassis was reported to have left Egypt suddenly, a fact which gave rise to different rumours.<sup>(12)</sup>

On 12th May Brandi informed Ainslie that Cassis's destination was Germany where he intended to live in solitude with his fortune.<sup>(13)</sup>

The circumstances of Anton Cassis' departure are rather obscure as Hoskins claims; but there is no reason why we should <sup>not</sup> accept Ainslie's interpretation, namely, that the failure of the Austrian scheme, was due to the intrigues of the French, who were able to win Murad Bey, one of the two actual ruling Beys to their side.<sup>(14)</sup> The details of these intrigues are certainly somewhat vague.

The treaty of Versailles, Sept. 1783, tended to exert some influence on French projects in the Eastern Mediterranean, though scarcely lessening the hostile feelings between the two Powers.<sup>(15)</sup> The French aimed at commercial expansion both in the Mediterranean Sea and the East Indies.

French activities in Egypt, during this period, indicate two outstanding factors. In the first place, France gave up the idea of occupying the country (for this did not suit the pacific policy of Vergennes) in favour of opening the land route of Egypt for the development of commercial communications between France and the East Indies.

12.F.O.78 Turkey 5. Brandi to Ainslie 5 January 1784 (Italian text)

13.Ibid. 12 May (Italian text).

14.F.O.78 Turkey 6. Ainslie to Carmarthen 9 July 1785.

15.Charles-Roux, L'Angleterre....etc. P.166.



In the second place, France altered its policy of using her influence at Constantinople to open up the route, in favour of direct negotiations with the ruling Beys. Though France was the first European Country since the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, to obtain a considerable influence in Egypt, it is nevertheless true that her new policy was a typical imitation of that of the British Authorities in India in 1775 and of the Austrians in 1782 as far as Egypt was concerned.

In 1783 Vergennes sent instructions to Choiseul-Gouffier, the new French Ambassador at Constantinople, to procure for France the Porte's consent to open up Suez for French vessels.<sup>(16)</sup> Although French influence was preponderant, it is quite unlikely that Choiseul succeeded in obtaining that consent which would, however, have had very little effect in Egypt.<sup>(17)</sup> Late in 1784 Choiseul succeeded in procuring a note of friendship to the Beys of Egypt, from the Capitan Pasha, (grand Admiral of the Ottoman Fleet) in favour of the French merchants in Egypt.<sup>(18)</sup> With this note Chevalier Truguet was sent to Cairo to open negotiations with the Beys for a commercial treaty.<sup>(19)</sup>

Truguet was supported by a colleague, Charles Mogallon,

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16. Charles-Roux, *l'Isthme et le Canal de Suez* P.P.109-111.

17. F.O.78 Turkey 6. Ainslie to Carmarthen 10 March 1785.

18. Charles-Roux. *Les Origines....etc.* P.148.

19. Ibid. *L'Angleterre....etc.* P.171.

who had resided in Cairo for more than twenty years, and had succeeded in cultivating the friendship of the Beys.<sup>(20)</sup>

However, those twenty-two years of Mogallon's experience in Egypt might have availed little in negotiating a treaty with the Beys, but for the fact that Mme. Mogallon had once been of service to the principal wife of Murad Bey and had remained on intimate terms with her.<sup>(21)</sup> In short, early in 1785, Truguet managed to conclude the treaty.<sup>(22)</sup>

Most of the details of this treaty does not concern us. There are, however, two prominent features which command attention. First, it guaranteed to the French Consul and French subjects 'such honours, superior to those of any other nation whatever'. Secondly, the duties were more favourable than those agreed on in the Mehemet-Hastings treaty; the French had to pay 4% to the Pasha and 2% to the 'Prince' (Murad Bey). In order to give the document a semblance of regularity, it was provided that the treaty should continue in

20. Ibid.

21. Charles-Roux, *L'Angleterre, etc.* P.171.  
*L'Isthme et la Canal de Suez*, P.110.  
*Les Origines, etc.* P.149.

22. F.O.78 Turkey 6 & I.O.F.R. 'Egypt and the Red Sea' V. 'Convention between the Court of France to the Government of Egypt' etc, 7 February & Baron de Testa, *Recueil des traites de la Porte Ottoman* & Charles-Roux *L'Isthme et le Canal de Suez*, Annexe 6. The English copy mentioned the date as 7 February, while Charles-Roux and Baron de Testa gave 9 January. Hoskins consulted the English one.



force pending the arrival of the 'Hatti Sherif' from the Porte to notify it. Moreover, Truguet succeeded in making two other conventions, one with the Sheik Nassar Shedid, for the engagement of the caravan camels while crossing the desert between Cairo and Suez, the other with the Customs Master of Cairo and Alexandria,<sup>(23)</sup> Joseph Cassip who had succeeded Anton Cassis in 1784.<sup>(24)</sup> In this last agreement, the Customs Master 'promised on his word, honour and truth, all attention, super-intendence, and protection to the French Nation, and French merchants coming from India to Suez'. In return he would receive  $1\frac{1}{2}\%$  on Indian merchandise transmitted to France through Egypt and 3% on those intended for the Egyptian or Turkish markets.

In 1785, the French appeared to have obtained more than the British had asked for in 1775. In fact, it was considered at that time as a great triumph. 'Paris' said Pingand, 'pour/ vait saluer de loin la Caravane du Caire... comme une conquête nationale.'<sup>(25)</sup>

23. Charles-Roux L'Isthme et le Canal de Suez P.110.

24. F.O.78 Turkey 6 & I.O.F.R. Egypt & the Red Sea V. Secret Contract, between the Chevalier Truguet..and the Sieur Guisseppe Cassop Fermier General. 22 Feb 1785. & Baron de Testa Op.cit. Tome 2. Charles-Roux L'Isthme - Au.7. The English copy gave the 22 Feb. for the treaty, while the French gave 23 Jan. Cassip followed Cassis in 1784. Brandi said about him 'The people enjoy in his rule, peace and safety'. Brandi to Ainslie 12 May 1784. F.O. 78 Turkey 5. (Italian text).

25. Pingand; Choiseul-Gouffier, La France en Orient sous Louis XVI. T.1.P.22.

Though there was no English consul or agent in Egypt at that time, the news was nevertheless reported to Ainslie in March through informers in English employ.<sup>(26)</sup> The information was vague and inaccurate, but two facts puzzled Ainslie, firstly rumours were spread in Europe that the Porte had given consent to the project, and secondly, that the French Ambassador at Constantinople repeatedly disavowed any intention of his Government to establish a mercantile communication between Europe and India through Egypt. (It must be remembered that Ainslie had always convinced the Foreign Office of the stubborn hostility of the Porte to any scheme of navigation in the gulf of Suez). Only then did he become suspicious of the sincerity of the Porte's declaration. What made him more anxious was not only that the French scheme would probably be detrimental to the interests of the two British Companies concerned, but also his growing convictions that France was 'intent upon introducing into that navigation the Flags of some Mohammedan Prince, perhaps Tippo Sultan, and to avail itself of it for the prosecution of their dangerous executions. The extraordinary Embassy from that Prince visibly calculated to flatter the Ottoman pride is perhaps only intended to favour this project.'<sup>(27)</sup> To compete, however, with French

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26. Brandi retired at the end of 1784 after 25 years in Egypt and went to Constantinople. F.O.78 Turkey & Extract d'une lettre d'Alexandrie 29 Jan.1785.

27. F.O.78 Turkey 6. Ainslie to Carmarthen 18 March 1785.



activities in Egypt, there were two ways open to Ainslie; one was to insist upon equality of advantages for English subjects, in his words, 'to fight them with their own weapons', the other was to engage the Porte to withdraw its concession from the French. The first Ainslie considered 'very inadequate' the second as 'not impossible'.<sup>(28)</sup> The Foreign Office was obviously inclined to support the second plan. 'Whatever part France may be inclined to take in the affairs of Turkey' wrote Carmarthen to Ainslie on 10th of May, 'it becomes an object of great importance to us to prevent, if possible, the attainment of her views in Egypt. The consequence they must inevitably produce, if carried into effect, upon our East India Trade and establishments are too obvious to require the smallest explanation....I can easily conceive that France may insist upon these demands as a moderate and reasonable reward for her supposed attention to the interests of the Porte, on many occasions when that Power has been threatened with destruction by its formidable neighbours, but, at the same time, it will behove the Porte to consider how far it may be consistent with (prudent) and really policy to (take) a measure which must so strongly <sup>injure</sup> the interests of England, whose friendship she ought not to forfeit at a time of so much danger to her own prosperity, one might also add, to her existence'.<sup>(29)</sup> Ainslie, however, sent Brandi (who was in Constantinople) to Alexandria to procure

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28. Ibid. 10 March 1785.

29. Ibid. Carmarthen to Ainslie 10 May 1785.

a copy of the treaty.<sup>(30)</sup> Before the arrival of the copy, Ainslie seems to have been convinced of the hostility of the Porte to the French scheme and the mention of Hatti Sheriff was only inserted as a 'salvo' for the 'Ambassador' and as 'an inducement for the Indian speculators to engage in this trade under the French flag'.<sup>(31)</sup> With a copy of the treaty, Ainslie had a conference with the Reis Effendi in November, in which Ainslie confronted him with the treaty and insisted, in strong terms, on an explanation.<sup>(32)</sup> The Reis Effendi besides denying the Porte's consent promised that measures would be taken to effect the breakdown of the French scheme.<sup>(33)</sup> In point of fact these schemes were bound to have failed because of three factors:-

- A. The intrigues of Russia in Egypt.
- B. The opposition of the French India Company.
- C. The uneasiness of the Porte.

Russian intrigues against the Porte and the French schemes in Egypt were more serious in 1785 than at any other time since the revolt of Ali Bey (1769). Catherine II. encouraged the Beys to declare their independence and Russians were reported to have arrived at Alexandria, to incite the Beys against France.<sup>(34)</sup> In July, Baron Thonius arrived at

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30. Ibid. Ainslie to Carmarthen 9 July 1785.

31. Ibid. 10 October 1785.

32. Ibid. 10 November 1785.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid. Brandi to Ainslie 22 August 1785.



Alexandria as a consul, and gained influence among the Beys, as reports say, by a 2,000 dollars.<sup>(35)</sup>

The French East India Company, which was then renewing its chartered monopoly, opposed the scheme of India trade by Suez. 'La nouvelle Compagnie ne s'accorde point des nouveautes. Elle oppose son privilège, guigne la nouvelle entreprise n'y donnait aucune attente, puisqu'il ne s'agissait pas de rapporter en France aucune marchandise de l'Inde'.<sup>(36)</sup>

The Russian intrigues, Ainslie's strong reproaches and the arrival of a French packet-boat at Suez, put the Porte on its guard. An expedition was prepared to be sent to Egypt, to force the loyalty of the Beys.<sup>(37)</sup> Ainslie was undoubtedly exaggerating in his correspondence to the Foreign Office, when he attributed the expedition to the French treaty alone. In fact the 'punitive expedition' was an Ottoman plan envisaged before 1785. In 1780 the Porte intended to send a force to Egypt 'to chastise the Beys, who for some years past have paid very little regard to her commands, and who, on the contrary effect to treat the Turk Governors with the greatest indignity'.<sup>(38)</sup> The threat of Russia in the Black

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35. Ibid. Ainslie to Carmarthen 9 July 1785.  
B.M. Add.MSS. 38223 F.232. A letter from Alexandria 22 October 1788 (obviously by Brandi) talks about a Russian mission by Baron de Pouys to assist the Beys in their 'revolution' against the Porte.
36. Charles-Roux l'Isthme et le Canal de Suez, P.114.
37. F.O.78 Turkey 6 Ainslie to Carmarthen 25 November 1785.
38. F.O.78 Turkey 1 Ainslie to Hillsborough 1 January 1780.

Sea, however, had forcibly deprived the Porte of the squadron necessary for an expedition to Egypt. What the Ottoman ministers had succeeded in, was to convince Ainslie that the sole aim of the expedition was to frustrate the French treaty. In actual fact, the treaty soon proved to be a failure. As with every treaty concluded in Egypt in the second half of the 18th century, the Mamelukes viewed it with contempt; R. Worsely, who was visiting Egypt in 1785 assured Ainslie of the very little hope of any commercial advantages that could be derived from the French treaty. 'He was himself' wrote Ainslie to Carmarthen, 'an eye witness to insults and impositions put upon them (the French) for which they did not even dare to ask for redress'.<sup>(39)</sup> There can be no better illustration of the fact that the French in Egypt, were as well as other Europeans, the victims of the Bey's despotism and deceit, than the behaviour of Murad Bey (the man who concluded the treaty with the French), against the Roman Catholic Church and the Fathers' Convents at Alexandria (1785) in order to extort money from the Christian merchants and consuls.<sup>(40)</sup>

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39. F.O.78 Turkey 6 Ainslie to Carmarthen 25 November 1785.

40. F.O.Turkey 7. February 1786. The Memorial of different foreign Ambassadors to the Porte.



## CHAPTER VIII.

Decline of British interest in Egypt.

In London the news of the French treaty caused no little concern to the Foreign Office and the East India Company. In 1780 a Parliamentary Act was issued to prohibit 'from and after the 5th of July 1782' any British subject from carrying or being concerned in any trade, of 'the produce or manufacture of the East Indies or China' to Europe by Suez.<sup>(1)</sup> The popular belief was that any trade between India and Egypt was detrimental to the East India and the Levant Companies. Moreover, this route would offer France a speedy way to contact the Anti-British sovereigns in India. It was no secret that in 1777 Hyder Ali of Mysore had written to the Porte asking for help against England, and that Tipu Sultan had sent an embassy to Constantinople in 1784.<sup>(2)</sup> The intention of the latter, was said, was 'to appoint Vackeels to reside at Aleppo and Constantinople in order, through them, to keep up a regular intercourse with Europe',<sup>(3)</sup> and for 'opening a vent for part of the produce of (his) country'.<sup>(4)</sup> The anxiety in London gave Baldwin and his supporters a golden opportunity to express their views. Failing to get redress at Constantinople in 1780, Baldwin left for London, where he presented (1781-84) many

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1. A table of the Statutes Public and Private, The Statutes at large, from Magna Charta to the end of the 11th Parliament of Great Britain. Vol. XXXIII 1780. P.430.
  2. S.P.97.53. Ainslie to Weymouth, April 17, 1777 & Charles-Roux, Antour, etc. P.178.
  3. F.O.78 Turkey 7. Griffith to Ainslie, 5 September 1786.
  4. Ibid. Griffith to the Court of Directors, 3 Sept. 1786.

petitions to the Court of Directors<sup>(5)</sup> and the Court of Proprietors<sup>(6)</sup> but practically without effect. In fact, Baldwin lacked the confidence of the Court of Directors and the accusations of Ainslie were responsible in no small measure for this. The most striking point in Baldwin's reports was the claim that the Porte was not seriously interested in the whole question. 'People' he said, 'will not believe that the Turks were indifferent to that intercourse as an object of commerce. They will not believe that the indignation of the Porte so vehemently expressed, was no more than the dictates of an English Ambassador.'<sup>(7)</sup> The widespread rumour that the Porte had consented to the French treaty was discredited by Baldwin's fantastic assumption which gained for him allies such as the nine proprietors headed by Commodore Johnstone<sup>(8)</sup> (who asked the Company to give Baldwin an appointment in its service) and servants like Irwin, Rumbold, Raiker, Mark Wood and Captain Wooley.

There is no doubt that there was general regret at the suppression of the agency in Egypt. Events had proved the route to be invaluable, particularly during time of war.<sup>(9)</sup> The rupture with Spain was not known at Madras until almost twelve months after the event, and during the most critical period of the whole war, people in England were entirely ignorant of events on the

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5. I.O.F.R. 'Egypt & the Red Sea' V. 'The Humble petition of G.Baldwin...etc' (undated)
  6. Ibid. Baldwin to the Proprietors of E.I.Stock. 15 June 1783.
  7. Ibid. 'The Communication with India...etc' by Baldwin (undated)
  8. Ibid. 'Proceedings at the General Quarterly Court of the East India Company...etc' 26 March 1783.
  9. Annual Register 1778. Vol.40.P.402.



coast of Coromandel until eight months later.<sup>(10)</sup> British surveyors in the Red Sea, ranging from G. Trottee (the harbour and road of Suez in the Red Sea 1779), Lieut Mascal (plan of the harbour....1782), W. Robinson (Suez harbour surveyed by Capt. W. Robinson 1784) and L.S. de la Rochette (the North West Branch of the Red Sea 1785) made the Red Sea more familiar to British navigation. It would be difficult to find any British traveller in Egypt during this period who did not strongly recommend the land route of Egypt at least for despatches. The best informed and the most enthusiastic of these travellers was undoubtedly James Capper who in 1784 published his 'observations...etc'. According to him, had the route been in use when the Peace of Versailles was concluded, it would have saved the lives of the two thousand and eighty Englishmen who were killed in useless battles long after the war had been formally ended.<sup>(11)</sup> 'Every man acquainted with India must know' he said, 'that it is of the highest importance to individuals, to the Company, and to the nation at large, to have this channel of communication opened again'.<sup>(12)</sup> The publication of these books predisposed the minds of some

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10. I.O.F.R. 'Egypt & the Red Sea' V. A report not signed or titled and starting 'The necessity of a speedy communication of intelligence between England to India....etc'. The report is likely to be Baldwin.

11. Capper. P.XII.

12. Ibid. P.XIII.

statesmen in England to the acceptance of the theory that 'the safety of our settlements in India must at all times depend upon an easy and speedy communication of intelligence..<sup>(13)</sup>'

The financial situation of Bengal bore favourably on the question. Burke, in dealing with the question of the drain of currency to that province, suggested a trade with Egypt as one of the solutions.<sup>(14)</sup> Veretot in a series of letters to the Court of Directors, as well as Major Scott in his pamphlet entitled 'A review of the transactions in Bengal during the last ten years' gave some support to Burke's suggestion and strongly recommended it as 'a measure necessary to relieve the want of specie in Bengal'.<sup>(15)</sup> Baldwin, in his report 'Considerations on the country trade as to its influence on the affairs of the country and particularly as it connects with the navigation and trade to Suez', went further in declaring that the suppression of the trade with Suez was partly responsible for the drain of specie to Bengal.<sup>(16)</sup>

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13. I.O.F.R. Ibid. 'The necessity of a speedy communication...etc'.

14. Ibid. 'Extracts from Mr. Burke's 9th report'.

15. Ibid. Extracts from Major Scott's pamphlet. P.P.11-12,97.

16. Op.cit.



In 1782, W. Macintosh published his 'Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa', in which he made a close study<sup>(17)</sup> of the question of the 'Gulf trade'. He maintained that the East India Company 'entertained false ideas concerning' this trade. He rebutted the Company's point of view namely that such commerce would interfere with their sales in Europe and most particularly with the trade of the Levant Company. In the first place he showed that both the quality and quantity of the goods exported from India to Suez were appreciably different to those Indian imports carried on from England to Turkey by the Levant Company. Secondly, the articles of remittance to Britain for goods exported from India to the Red Sea were bills of exchange, Venetian gold and Spanish or German crowns. 'It therefore becomes a political question, whether it will prove advantageous to Britain, that the Levant Company shall enjoy new and exclusive privileges, which, without being of the smallest advantage to the British nation in any respect, embarrass the Indian trade, and one branch of which it tends to foreclose?' Macintosh estimated the 'Gulf trade' (both in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf) at £350,000 per annum. But he claimed that the trade might 'reasonably be computed to yield twenty to twenty-five per cent profit' and thus furnish an 'annual market....for about half a million of pounds sterling'. Furthermore the principal returns of this

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17. Vol.II. P.P.135-141.

trade were gold and silver which were essential to the prosperity of India. He suggested that attempts should be made 'to revive and re-establish those branches of commerce upon new and comprehensive system'. He proposed two steps in this direction. The first was to put the free merchants under different 'restrictions' and 'limitations'; 'to prevent those abuses which have been so loudly complained of; the debasement of the qualities, and at the same time the increase of the prices, of commodities'. The second step was that the free merchants should never be allowed to trade beyond the limits of the Company's (E.I.C.) dominions without passports. 'The fluctuations and insecurity peculiar to any commerce which is restricted by the arbitrary will of an exclusive Company and despotic Government (The Turkish)', he concluded 'are two obvious not to damp the ardour of even the hardest speculators in commerce!'.

The development of the East India Company during the period 1757-84, from a predominantly commercial into a predominantly territorial power was a determining factor in the intervention of the Crown, an intervention which in 1784 resulted in what was known as the 'Board of Control',<sup>(18)</sup>

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18. Phillips, P.P.30-34.



That intervention of necessity placed the political conduct of the Company in due subordination to the policy of the home government and while the East India Company was averse to the reopening of that trade, the British government could not overlook the French schemes in Egypt. The re-establishment of a British consulate in Egypt in 1786, contrary to the general feelings of the Court of Directors, illustrates that the Company's policy could no longer be independent of the policy of the British government.<sup>(19)</sup> Moreover, Dundas, at the head of the Board of Control, was hostile to the Company between 1784 and 1788, and his policy was to deprive it of its political powers and to establish himself as the Secretary of State for India.<sup>(20)</sup> Dundas sent for Baldwin late in 1785 and asked him to submit a report upon the situation in Egypt, in response to which the latter presented his well-known 'Speculations on the situation and Resources of Egypt'.<sup>(21)</sup> The report dealt with Egypt's relative situation on the globe, its commerce, its productions and commercial resources, its government, the means of its conquest, its present defences, its importance to England and to France and finally as a colony of France. The report distinctly stresses the importance of the geographical position of Egypt for British possessions in India

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19. I.O.F.R. Ibid. Johnstone to Dundas 4 Sept. 1785.

20. Phillips, P. 49.

21. I.O.F.R. Op Cit. & Baldwin's 'Political recollections'.

and the fatal repercussions on them should France conquer Egypt. Obviously Dundas was convinced by Baldwin's views, and apparently, with his influence, the government approved the appointment of a consul-general in Egypt, whose first aim would be the conclusion of a treaty with the Beys in terms similar to those effected with the French, and who would also endeavour to facilitate the transmission of despatches between England and India.

The end of 1785 and the beginning of 1786 saw the arguments exchanged over this question between Dundas and his protégé on one hand, and the Court of Directors on the other. The latter, though endorsing the question of despatches, was extremely hostile to the India trade with Egypt. Early in 1786 a compromise between the views of Baldwin and those of the Court of Directors was affected; England would conclude the treaty, but would not implement it until the East India Company had considered the subject thoroughly and given its decision.<sup>(22)</sup> This arrangement had not been taken into consideration by either Hoskins or Charles-Roux. It is difficult to understand how and why Baldwin or Dundas agreed to such terms. To Baldwin it was quite clear that the question of the despatches could not be disposed of separately, as far as the Beys of Egypt were concerned. Had Dundas been able to materialize his views on the treaty with Egypt, the Anglo-French rivalry in that country might possibly have been another story. In fact, one may conclude that the treaty with the Beys was still-born.

Baldwin was chosen as consul-general under two

22. I.O.F.R. Op.cit. Instructions to Mr. Baldwin & G.D.8/157. Dundas to Pitt (undated).



conditions, first to conclude the treaty within a year and secondly never to engage himself in trade without the approval of the Company.<sup>(23)</sup> There were two main questions which Dundas had to deal with; that of financing the project and that of organizing a system of despatches. With regard to the first point, there are several pertinent reports among the Factory Records. Whilst one cannot deal with all of these, it is important to instance those of Johnstone and a certain Ritchie, both presented to Dundas at the end of 1785. Johnstone calculated that the use of the overland route through Egypt would save £25,000 a year, the despatches via that route, according to him cost only £1,250 per annum.<sup>(24)</sup> Ritchie estimated the expenses at £3,360.<sup>(25)</sup> With regard to the organization of despatches it was found through past experience that packets from England to India were, in general, far more expeditious than those returning homeward, on account of summer and south-westerly and winter north-easterly monsoons. From England to India, the best period for the journey was between April and October-November when no monsoons prevail. From December to February, the N.E. Monsoon, was an obstacle, and it was suggested that despatches should be sent either from Calcutta to Madras, thence to Bombay, or from Calcutta directly to Bombay. Finally, to meet the difficulty of the N.W. winds which tended to drive vessels Eastward and which prevailed for ten months in the year in the upper part of the Red Sea, it was suggested that when unable to proceed in the Gulf of Suez, the vessels should anchor at Tor, the despatches being sent on to Gaza and then to Venice. In case of vessels not

23. I.O.F.R. Op.Cit. 'Instructions to Mr. Baldwin'.

24. Ibid. Johnstone to Dundas 4 Sept. 1785.

25. Ibid. 'The great objects in the communication between the country and India...'

being able to proceed north of Judda, they should anchor at Cosaire, the despatches being sent across the desert to Keneh, and thence by the Nile to Cairo. Consequently native agents were required to reside at these ports to facilitate the transmission.<sup>(26)</sup>

Early in 1786 Dundas formulated his plan, with due regard to economy. The yearly expenses of the consulate amounted to £1,400; £500 as Baldwin's salary, £100 for each agent at Cosaire, Judda, Tor and Gaza, and £500 for necessary presents to the Pasha of Egypt, the Sheik El Balad, and other Beys.<sup>(27)</sup> Apart from this £2,000 was allowed for the immediate purposes of the treaty. Baldwin was given the right to nominate the native agents. The instructions to him made it clear that the commercial treaty and the despatches were considered in the circles of the Company as two separate questions. 'With regard to the commercial privileges, you are not to make it a particular stipulation that they shall be exercised, as far as they are commercial.... It must rest with the discretion of the East India Company who trade under the Royal Charter to avail themselves of these or not as they shall fit.. But it is certainly intended to make immediate use of the communication through Egypt to India for the purpose of receiving and forwarding public despatches.<sup>(28)</sup>....etc'.

Furthermore, Baldwin was instructed to correspond directly with one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State and with the Company. From time to time he had to send reports on

the commercial activities of France, or any 'Asiatic Powers in

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid. 'Draft of instructions to Mr. Baldwin'

28. Ibid.



alliance with her', in Egypt and the Red Sea. On the conclusion of the treaty Baldwin was to send it to Ainslie for the ratification of the Porte. Finally, he was requested to 'forget his past differences with Ainslie'.<sup>(29)</sup>

The Levant Company regarded the decision of the East India Company and the government with no little apprehension. As far as any commerce between India Egypt was concerned, the hostile views of the Company were exactly the same as those of their representative, Sir R. Ainslie. What gave rise to most antagonism in the new situation was the appointment of a consul in Egypt by the East India Company.<sup>(30)</sup> Egypt came within the charter of the Levant Company and the appointment of consuls in the Ottoman dominions was certainly the Company's privilege. There is also reason to believe that the Levant Company was apprehensive that such a measure might possibly cause a dispute between them and the East India Company. From June to September the Company urged Ainslie to advise his Government to abandon the new project and to express his 'full sentiments to His Majesty's Ministers on this subject'.<sup>(31)</sup> As a matter of fact, Ainslie did not need persuasion. In the first place, he argued that the 'appointments of consuls in the Grand Signior's dominions formed an essential part of the charter granted to the Turkey Company...no person can act there (Egypt) in a public capacity, independent of the Embassy, unless the Beys of Egypt,

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29. Ibid.

30. S.P.105.121. Company to Lord North, 14 Oct. 1785.

31. F.O.78 Turkey 7. Company to Ainslie 2. Sept. 1786.

who acknowledge his public character, are to be looked upon as independent of the Porte'.<sup>(32)</sup> In the second place, he felt that the Capitan Pasha's campaign in Egypt would necessarily alter the attitude of the East India Company to the whole question, an attitude based on separate negotiations with Egypt, disregarding the Porte's sovereignty.<sup>(33)</sup>

In spite of this, the Levant merchants failed in their protests. In point of fact, this failure is another example of the beginnings of the clash between Imperial considerations and the monopolist companies at that time. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Carmarthen, wrote in strong terms to Ainslie that 'as that Company (Levant) may be of opinion that the opening (of) the communications through Egypt to India would be prejudicial to their commercial interests...your Excellency is to consider.....that neither the orders nor the interests of the Turkey Company shall be repugnant in any manner whatsoever to the superior interests of the nation at large..<sup>(34)</sup>

With this instruction, the whole plan was explained to Ainslie and he was directed to use his endeavours to persuade the Porte to repeal its prohibitory Firman of 1779 and to ratify the proposed treaty between England and the Government of Egypt. From all the evidence, it is quite clear that the establishment of a British consulate in Egypt and the proposed treaty, was the outcome of a policy designed to counteract French activities in

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32. Ibid. Ainslie to Company. 25 Jan. 1786.

33. Ibid. Ainslie to Company. 9 Sept. 1786.

34. Ibid. Carmarthen to Ainslie 1 Sept. 1786 & I.O.F.R.Op.Cit. Dundas to Carmarthen 19 May 1786. Also in G.D. 8/157 Dundas to Pitt (undated).



Egypt rather than to exploit the trade through this channel. One might even regard the question of the overland route through Egypt as a typical illustration of British Foreign policy with regard to the Near East, the incentive of which was British sensitiveness to French activities in the 18th century.

Ainslie was requested, in case of Baldwin's failure, to conclude a treaty himself with the Porte on the same terms. Two thousand pounds was put at his disposal to obtain the Porte's revocation of the Firman, and the ratification of the proposed treaty. Six hundred pounds per annum was moreover granted for making suitable presents to the Ottoman Ministers. Finally, he was instructed to persevere in the policy of appeasement with the Porte, and while Baldwin would be negotiating with the Beys, he was to try to explain to the Porte that Baldwin's negotiations did not 'arise from any unfriendly motives towards the Porte...but from the present weak and disordered state of the Turkish Government, from the great delay such a negotiation must necessarily meet at Constantinople, from the probability of its being interrupted by the interposition of a rival nation, from the little dependence which, at this moment, the Egyptian Government acknowledge to the authority of the Porte....'(35) The weakness of this policy lies in the fact that it was somewhat paradoxical to disclaim unfriendly motives while bidding for an advantageous position in a Turkish Province.

Baldwin arrived in Egypt early in 1786 and immediately appointed Thomas Turner, as vice-consul at Alexandria. No sooner

had he contacted the Beys than the expedition under the Capitan Pasha took place in June 1786. In August near Cairo, he defeated the Mamelukes, who fled to Upper Egypt. The new circumstances should have altered British policy with regard to the proposed treaty, since it was a policy based on the assumption that the Beys were 'de facto' independent of the Porte. Baldwin claimed that the 'late events (that have) taken place in Egypt are most favourable to the intention of my appointment' on the grounds that the reassertion of Ottoman sovereignty in Egypt would enable Ainslie 'more effectually to employ' his influence at the Porte for the success of Baldwin's negotiations with the Turkish Admiral in Egypt.<sup>(36)</sup> Such a claim on his part was certainly with deliberate disregard of the fact that the treaty was essentially supposed to be concluded with the Beys. A 'barat' and letters of recommendation from Ainslie to the Capitan Pasha<sup>(37)</sup> and from the Grand Vizir to the new Pasha of Egypt<sup>(38)</sup> reached Baldwin at the end of 1786. These communications do not contain, however, the slightest mention of the British plan. In accordance with the new situation, the main burden of the British plan appeared to rest on Ainslie's efforts at Constantinople.

Ainslie was given to understand that the Porte could not determine a single point relative to Egypt, until a form of administration had been established there. 'Till then' he wrote to his government, 'is it reasonable to expect that the Porte

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36. Ibid. Baldwin to Ainslie 13 Jan. 1786.

37. Ibid. Ainslie to Gizi Hassan Pasha 23 Oct. 1786.

38. Ibid. Ainslie to Baldwin 23 Oct. 1786.



would dare to disoblige the Sheik of Mecca in favour of a Christian Power, or can I hope that in the troubles of an alarming crisis she would, without important motive, venture to disgust France and other courts of Europe by conceding to us what she positively refused them all. I shall only add that (were) I at present to hazard any steps to embarrass the administration, it could not fail....to ruin my credit with the Diwan'.<sup>(39)</sup> As matters stood, it was apparently difficult for the Porte, which claimed that the objective of the expedition was the counteract foreign schemes, to give its consent to the English plan. It is undoubtedly true that the expedition was considered by the Porte, as well as by the courts of Europe as a test of the Porte's ability to preserve its Empire. Lord Carmarthen, referring to the situation in Egypt, thought it very interesting 'by being considered as materially affecting the Turkish Government both as to internal strength as well as external ability, and, of course, (it) may furnish some ground for calculating how far that strange and particular system of despotism is at all equal to a competition with its more polished and more ambitious European rival'.<sup>(40)</sup>

In March, a French frigate (The Venus) arrived at Suez from Calcutta. The passengers were coldly welcomed by Capitan Pasha, who solemnly asked the French consul, M. Mure to explain this step.<sup>(41)</sup> However, Baldwin considered the visit of the

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39. F.O.78 Turkey 8. Ainslie to Carmarthen 26 Feb. 1787.

40. F.O.78 Turkey 7. Carmarthen to Ainslie 19 Dec. 1786.

41. F.O.78 Turkey 8. Bucciatti to Ainslie 18 April 1787 & Ainslie to Carmarthen 25 May 1787.

French frigate might be used as a precedent and communicated the incident to Ainslie to use as a ground for a similar concession for ~~the~~ British subjects. He also mentioned to Ainslie that the Capitan Pasha was ready to help Baldwin in his plan, provided he (the Pasha) received instructions from the Porte.<sup>(42)</sup>

In June and July 1787 Ainslie's repeated requests for equal rights proved ineffective. The Reis Effendi explained to him that the visit of the 'Venus' was no indication of the Porte's desire to change its policy with regard to the navigation of the French in the Red Sea beyond Judda. Ainslie's strong representations, even his presents of 2,100 dollars, did not extract more than a promise on behalf of the Ottoman ministers to consider the British plan after an administration in Egypt had been established.<sup>(43)</sup> It would appear that Ainslie was convinced by the Ottoman point of view, for on 10 July, 1787, he wrote to Carmarthen justifying his own decision to wait until the expedition had completed its object.<sup>(44)</sup>

However, Ainslie's resolution did not please the anxious consul-general, who had to arrange the treaty within a year. In fact, Baldwin being wholly unaware of the position at Constantinople, felt that the Admiral's promises to help him in his plan, and his cordial reception of Lord Murray in Egypt (July 1786)<sup>(45)</sup> were evidences of good will on the part of the Ottoman Government and that Ainslie was not doing his utmost in

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42. Ibid. Baldwin to Ainslie 3 April 1787.

43. Ibid. Ainslie to Carmarthen 10 July 1787.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid. Baldwin to Ainslie 19 Oct. 1787.



the circumstances. In October 1787 another period of mutual accusations and recriminations began. 'For my part' wrote Ainslie to Carmarthen, 'I am persuaded he (Baldwin) has been the dupe of the Capitan Pasha's finesse and perhaps of his avarice....He says the Capitan Pasha expresses a strong desire that I should obtain only the least testimonial of the Porte's concurrence with his intentions. This to me is the strongest demonstration, if not of his disapprobation, at least, of the Capitan Pasha's resolution to take nothing upon himself'...

'like most Europeans (he was) misled by the exterior apperance, thinks the Turks a heavy people, with whom much may be risked'.<sup>(46)</sup>

The irony of the whole situation is that Ainslie himself was misled by the 'exterior' promises of the Turks at Constantinople. From September 1787 to July 1788, he gained nothing except repeated promises from the Ottoman Vizir. On 10 October he wrote to his Government 'I flatter myself that the affair of the navigation in the Red Sea will now succeed'.<sup>(47)</sup> Five months later he wrote that 'my chief dependence, for the present, is upon the promise, and I hope the real intention of the Vizir to seize the first opportunity to engage the Sultan (to) grant my demands....and in this hope I continue to pay extraordinary court in the Seraglio, at the Porte, and above all, to the Vizir's confidential agent here'.<sup>(48)</sup> In the same month he forwarded to his Government a list of presents given during the previous three months amounting to 61,415 piastres.<sup>(49)</sup>

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46. Ibid. Ainslie to Carmarthen 10 July 1787.

47. Ibid. 10 Oct. 1787.

48. F.O.78 Turkey 9. Ainslie to Carmarthen 20 Feb 1788.

49. Ibid. 22 July 1788.

In actual fact, Ainslie was partly responsible for the failure of the British plan. There were three advantages that Ainslie obviously did not use to the full; first his friendship with Capitan Pasha who was recalled to Constantinople in September 1787, secondly, the promise of the French Ambassador in the name of his court to prevent the navigation of French Vessels in the Red Sea beyond Judda and thirdly the earnest desire of the Porte to seek Britain's mediation in the Ottoman dispute with Russia.

It is only fair to add that Baldwin shares with Ainslie the responsibility of the failure. As early as September 1787 Ainslie asked his Government that the matter should be kept secret to avoid provoking the French at Constantinople, an act which might possibly ruin the English plan.<sup>(50)</sup> This may possibly be one of the reasons why Ainslie himself did not apply officially to the Porte concerning the matter. In spite of this Baldwin's movements in Egypt, his visits to Capitan Pasha, his frantic efforts to hasten the matter, made his plan known all over the Ottoman Empire. It was reported that merchants from Bengal had decided to start their journeys to Suez with Indian goods.<sup>(51)</sup> Moreover, Cornwallis, the Governor General of Bengal, sent instructions to Baldwin to facilitate the transmission of the despatches expected at Suez in January 1789.<sup>(52)</sup> Hayes, the British Consul at Smyrna heard rumours in his establishments about Baldwin's plan and as early as July 1787

50. F.O.78 Turkey 8. Ainslie to Carmarthen 10 Sept. 1787.

51. F.O.78 Turkey 9. Charles Smith to Ainslie 26 Sept. 1788.

52. F.O.78 Turkey 9. Baldwin to Ainslie 15 Oct. 1788.



wrote to Ainslie that 'I see little appearance of Mr. Baldwin's succeeding in the main object of his establishment'.<sup>(53)</sup> Charles Smith, the Consul-general at Aleppo wrote to Ainslie on 26 September 1788, 'We hear that packet-boats are to be established at Suez...(and) are expected in all the year from Bengal with 2,000 bales of muslins and calicos'.<sup>(54)</sup> 'It is no fault of mine' wrote Ainslie to Carmarthen on 8th November 1788 'if his (Baldwin) main object is known all over this Empire'

The situation was complicated by the French Ambassador's request for similar advantages, and by the French and Russian activities in Egypt to empower the Beys Murad and Ibrahim.<sup>(56)</sup> Reports came to Ainslie from Egypt, about the appearance of Baron Thonius in the country, with a commission to incite the Beys to free themselves from subjection to the Porte.<sup>(57)</sup> A certain M. Ribaud, who had been collaborating with Thonius, was arrested. Thonius himself was seized in September 1788 and confined in the citadel of Cairo.<sup>(58)</sup> Furthermore, the British Foreign Office communicated to the Porte on 8th January 1790 remarkable intelligence, concerning a project 'of the court of St. Petersburg to fit out a squadron, in the course of this year, for the purpose of making an attempt in the Red Sea upon the possessions of the Town of Judda and Yambo; of pillaging and ransoming the Towns of Medina and Mecca, of carrying off the Tomb of Mohamet, and of destroying

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53. F.O.78 Turkey 8. Hayes to Ainslie 7 July 1787.  
 54. F.O.78 Turkey 9. Charles Smith to Ainslie 26 Sept. 1788.  
 55. F.O.78 Turkey 8. Ainslie to Carmarthen 27 July 1787.  
 56. F.O.78 Turkey 9. Ainslie to Carmarthen 8 Nov. 1788.  
 57. Ibid. Baldwin to Ainslie 15 Oct. 1788.  
 58. Ibid. Ainslie to Carmarthen 8 Nov. 1788.

the Turkish fleet in that sea. For this purpose a squadron is to be fitted out, which is to touch at Madagascar and is to proceed to the Red Sea, under Dutch colours, and with a pretence of trading. The force of this projected squadron is represented to be eight vessels from fourteen to thirty-two guns, carrying 9,000 Europeans and six hundred slaves from Madagascar, each ship carrying out one or more pinnacles in frames, which may easily be put together, and may be used in the shallows of the coast'.<sup>(59)</sup> The documents of the Foreign Office do not contain any other evidence as to the authenticity of this project, of which history heard no more. It is noteworthy that the interest taken by the Foreign Office in London in immediately informing the Porte about the Russian project is possibly evidence of Pitt's vigorous policy over the question of Oczakov.

As early as November 1788, Ainslie wrote to the Foreign Office that he 'cannot consistently apply, either officially or privately, on the subject of Mr. Baldwin's request'.<sup>(60)</sup> 'I need not point out to your Lordship the impropriety of applying...for the command solicited by Mr. Baldwin which would certainly be refused and in the circumstances appears at least very improper...My only task would be to prevent bad consequences to the Levant Company's establishments and to the influence of his Majesty's mission here; but should my apprehensions prove groundless, and instead of goods, a packet-boat with despatches only comes down the Red Sea, I

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59. F.O.78. Turkey 11. Carmarthen to Ainslie 8 Jan. 1790.

60. Ibid. 15 July 1788.



certainly would prefer that the Porte should think that I had not been consulted - nay, was totally ignorant of the matter, than provoke a refusal and afterwards to be made answerable for the consequence of a disregard to the orders established'.<sup>(61)</sup> These two letters are a clear indication that the success or the failure of the British scheme remained with Baldwin alone.

Baldwin's activities in Egypt between 1790-1792 are not well-known to us. His despatches to the Foreign Office or to Ainslie were meagre. It can be assumed that, without achieving any measure of success, Baldwin was possibly apprehensive that the Government would close down the consulate. There were two obstacles that must have handicapped him, first the famine of 1792, and second, the constant warfare between Ismail Bey on one hand and Ibrahim and Murad on the other.<sup>(62)</sup> However, with the death of Ismail Bey in 1792 and the peaceful entrance of Ibrahim and Murad into Cairo, Baldwin appears to have been optimistic, and early in 1793 he succeeded in procuring from them a permit for despatches, some of which actually arrived from India on the 10th of April on the sloop Drake.<sup>(63)</sup> In the same year he despatched to India news about the rupture between England and France.<sup>(64)</sup> The attitude of the Beys towards the question of the Indian trade to Egypt seems to have slightly

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61. F.O.78. Turkey 9. Ainslie to Carmarthen 8 Nov. 1788.

62. F.O.78. Turkey 15. Baldwin to Liston 30 Oct. 1794.

63. F.O.78. Turkey 14. Baldwin to Ainslie 10 April 1793.

64. Ibid.

changed, for they insisted on a guarantee that the Porte should ratify the treaty. Ainslie, however, had already declared his inability to procure the Porte's consent, and matters remained at a standstill until the September of 1793 when Ainslie was suddenly recalled by his Government. Baldwin, who was pleased with Ainslie's exit from the stage, immediately gave the Beys the assurance that the next British Ambassador (who happened to be R. Liston) would procure the Porte's ratification.<sup>(65)</sup> It was a shrewd manoeuvre on his part, but it certainly committed Liston without previous notification. (66)  
On 28 February 1794, Baldwin concluded the treaty with the Beys.

The treaty ran into seventeen articles. With regard to the duties, one hundred Abu Taka had to be paid for anchorage, a duty of 6% on Indian goods (3% payable by the English merchant, the rest payable by the purchaser) while only 3% had to be paid on the goods of other countries. The other articles of the agreement were exactly those of the Mehemet-Hastings treaty. At the end, the document stresses that the 'observance is not to commence until the arrival of orders from the Sublime Porte of Constantinople'.

Baldwin was able to send a copy of this treaty to London and another to Bombay in July.<sup>(67)</sup> In despatching the

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65. <sup>P.O. 78.13</sup> ~~1613~~ Treaty between G. Baldwin and the Rulers of Egypt. 28 Feb. 1794.

67. <sup>1613</sup> ~~1613~~.

66. F.O. 78. Turkey 15, Baldwin to Liston 30 Oct. 1794.



treaty to R. Liston, he asked him to secure the Porte's ratification. A few years had passed since the limit given to Baldwin to conclude the treaty. He was undoubtedly aware of the fact that his Government was gradually losing interest in the whole question. Moreover, between 1787 and 1792, he did not correspond regularly with the Foreign Office. It appears as if Baldwin had not only to procure the sanction of the Porte to the treaty but also the approval of his own Government.<sup>(69)</sup> In his letter to the President and Council of Bombay he states that 'the instructions from his Majesty's ministers are necessary to put the treaty in effect'.<sup>(70)</sup> The fact is that he never obtained these instructions.

However, Baldwin in despatching the treaty to Liston wrote in these terms, 'I should be sorry that the circumstances might force any stress upon your Excellency's measure of proceeding, but the nature of the case has forced it upon me'.<sup>(71)</sup> Baldwin thought that the Porte's sanction would be easily procured now that Ainslie, who 'showed a personal reluctance to the measure at all times', had been recalled from the British Embassy.<sup>(72)</sup> Professor Hoskins, who tends to be

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69. F.O.78. Turkey 15. Baldwin to Grenville 10 Oct. 1794.

70. H.M. 634. 24 July 1794.

71. F.O.78. Turkey 15. Baldwin to Liston 30 Oct. 1794.

72.

sympathetic to Baldwin, throws the failure of the British plan, in no small measure, on Ainslie. It may be pointed out, however, that the attitude of the new ambassador to the question is evidence of Baldwin's misconception and Professor Hoskins's misjudgement. In point of fact, the reluctance of Ainslie was not due to his personal views, but much more to the nature of his mission. On the 24th of January 1795 Liston wrote to Grenville. 'The difficulty of obtaining the consent of the Ottoman Government to a measure which they have uniformly opposed, in consequence of religious and political prejudices, led me to wish for further instructions from your Lordship before I made any overtures on the subject to the Sublime Porte. In order to gain time with Mr. Baldwin, I wrote to him that I should delay giving my opinion concerning the probability of success here, till I was better acquainted with the precise nature of the arrangement proposed.... He proceeded upon the supposition that the obstacles which have been hitherto opposed to this transaction were owing to the disinclination of my predecessor in the Embassy, with whom he had a violent personal difference. But I find by an attentive perusal of the official correspondence that the blame thrown upon Sir R. Ainslie on this occasion is without foundation'.

'The celerity with which the (matter) has been conducted by Mr. Baldwin has thrown me into a degree of embarrassment and anxiety. For I hardly (see) the possibility



of obtaining the sanction of the Sultan to the arrangement in question. The instructions given on the subject to Sir R. Ainslie in 1786 were grounded on the supposition that the Porte could confirm a similar treaty which had been made the preceding year in favour of the French, but this circumstance never took place. The general idea of the impropriety and the danger of opening the navigation of the Red Sea to the Christian nations (is) continuing prevalent here with the same force as formerly. Indeed, even at the moment of the last rupture between this country and Russia, when the friendship of Great Britain was regarded as most immediately necessary; when two chief members in the administration were evidently attached to the Ambassador and possessed of unlimited authority, all that could be extorted was a promise of the freedom of conveying packets. At the present conjecture no such favourable circumstances exist, and it is particularly to be observed that there is not in the Turkish Ministry any man of sufficient weight or resolution to carry through an unpopular measure, even allowing his interest to be secured....(73)

Indeed, Liston's request for instructions was hardly necessary, since Baldwin's hope had begun to diminish by June 1795. In the first place, there was the obvious inability of Liston to obtain the Porte's consent. Secondly, the Arabs

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73. F.O. Turkey 16. Liston to Grenville 24 Jan. 1795.

continued to attack the British travellers between Suez and Cairo.<sup>(74)</sup> Thirdly, the 'Wahabis' or the rebels in Arabia, whose movement was apparent as early as November 1793, were spreading their influence so rapidly that in the last years of the 18th century the Indian trade in the Red Sea and to Basra was threatened.<sup>(75)</sup> Above all, the fact remains that the British Government, since 1792, had been gradually losing interest in Egypt. The primary reason which prompted the British Government to send Baldwin there, namely the French treaty, gradually became redundant with the failure of the French scheme. The two hostile companies concerned, then, found an ally in Grenville. Before the French Expedition, he was convinced neither of the importance of Egypt's geographical position to British possessions in India, nor sensible to the possibility of a French seizure of the country. In an excess of economical zeal, Grenville discovered in April 1792 that Baldwin was drawing about £1,400 a year, and suggested to Henry Dundas that since the consular office in Egypt was profitless and expensive it should be suppressed.<sup>(76)</sup> This suggestion, however, was met with a counter-suggestion. As early as 1785 Dundas had taken a sympathetic view of Baldwin's plans. He realised the necessity of a vigorous British policy in Egypt and the Near East. He was aware of the fact that Britain could hardly maintain her position in India if any native power, which might be ranged against them, should receive

74. F.O. 78. Turkey 16. Liston to Grenville ? June 1795.

75. F.O. 78. Turkey 19. A letter from Bagdad 31 March 1798.

~~Wilson, B.~~/H.M.C. Dropmore II.273. Grenville to Dundas

76.

1 April 1792.



assistance from France through Egypt or from Russia through Persia. After receiving from Major Forbes MacDonald a long report advocating a British occupation of Egypt,<sup>(77)</sup> he at once insisted that Baldwin's work was vital to British Indian interests. However, a few months later Grenville renewed his attack, the consulate then costing £2,000 instead of £1,400. He pointed out that if the services of Baldwin were sufficiently valuable to the East India Company to warrant its assumption of the cost of the establishment, the consular post might be continued, otherwise not.<sup>(78)</sup> This argument was conclusive and Baldwin was dismissed on the 18th February 1793. Although Dundas considered this step extremely awkward, he did nothing about it.<sup>(79)</sup> Perhaps nothing proves better the ill-timing of Baldwin's dismissal than the fact that it took place on the very day that the news of the French declaration of war reached England.<sup>(80)</sup> However, for unknown reasons, Baldwin did not receive notice of his dismissal until October 1795. Bitterly disappointing as this dismissal must have been, he decided to stay in Egypt still trying to implement his treaty.

The suppression of the British consulate in Egypt came at a time when British agents in the Near East and India were more apprehensive than at any other period in the 18th century of the French activities in that country. Reference

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77. Mel.MSS. 'Ed.M's E.I. Cat.', MacDonald to Dundas August 18, 1791.

78. H.M.C.Dropmore II. 373. Grenville to Dundas 25 Jan. 1793.

79. Ibid. P.621. Dundas to Grenville 17 Aug. 1794.

80. Furber, H. Henry Dundas; First Viscount Melville 1931.P.118.

has been made to the report of Major MacDonald, presented to Dundas on 18th August 1791. Captain John Taylor, a servant of the East India Company and member of the Committee of India Officers, became interested in the overland-route through Egypt at the end of 1790 and he 'could not help being astonished at the little attention paid to...the communication with England by the Isthmus of Suez'.<sup>(81)</sup> On 5th November 1790, he presented a detailed report to Sir Robert Abercrombie, in which he strongly advocated the necessity of speedy communication between England and India in time of war. Although he did not consider the arguments of the East India Company concerning the Indian trade with Egypt as satisfactory, he, nevertheless, thought it might be better to use the route for intelligence only. He went so far as to ask Sir J. Abercrombie's permission to make, with the next despatches to England, a survey in the Red Sea, in a vessel 'well armed' and carrying letters of recommendation to the Bey of Cairo and the Governor of Suez.<sup>(82)</sup> He suggested, moreover, that a visit should be paid to Cosaire 'to do away if possible the bad effects of (the) unfortunate quarrel between the crew of the Coventry Frigate and the Inhabitants of that place'.<sup>(83)</sup> If Taylor is to be believed, Abercrombie gave attention to the report and consulted Commodore William Robinson who approved the plan. The 'professional men belonging to the Company's Marine Service' whom Abercrombie also consulted, condemned it and the

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81. J.O.H.M. 436(2). Taylor's report to Abercrombie. 1790.

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid.



result was that the East India Company refused to approve it.<sup>(84)</sup>

In September 1791, Taylor, being in London presented to Dundas a detailed sixty-page report on the question. In this, he dealt with the paramount necessity of the communication between England and India through Egypt, the navigation in the Red Sea, the vessels to be employed, the establishment of British agents in the ports of the Red Sea and Mediterranean, the means of obtaining the Porte's consent, and lastly, a proposal to make a survey in the Red Sea at his own 'risk'.<sup>(85)</sup> There is no evidence, however, that he made the survey. In 1795 he published his 'Considerations on the practicability and advantages of a more speedy communication between Great Britain and her possessions in India', a work which was based mainly on Colonel James Capper's 'Observations on the passage to India'.

Sir Mark Wood, who in 1779 made a journey from England to India via Egypt and was the author of 'The importance of Malta considered in the years 1796 and 1798', wrote to Pitt and Dundas on 4th November 1796, pointing out the importance of a British establishment in Egypt and giving a warning of the French schemes there which might endanger the British possessions in India.<sup>(86)</sup> Almost nine months before this report was written, Sir Sydney Smith who was in the Levant during 1792-3, reported to Grenville concerning French intrigues in Egypt, 'a consequence of which will be, that

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84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.

86. Spencer Papers II, 437-49 & Rose, H. Bonaparte's Eastern Expedition. Eng. Hist. Rev. 44, P.54.

they will be enabled to realize the project of diverting the India trade (as far as regards the south of Europe) into the old channel of the desert and the Red Sea, reducing ours to our own immediate consumption...' He then proceeded to describe the deficiency of the military force of the Mamelukes, the easiness of conquering the country and concluded, 'Having now, as I hope, awakened your attention to the possibility of such an evil happening to us, it may be as well to see if we cannot avert it'.<sup>(87)</sup> The Cabinet was so absorbed in war with Revolutionary France that it gave these reports scanty attention, even if it did not ignore them altogether.

The accepted view among modern historians that the British Government was taken by surprise with regard to the French Expedition should, thus, be open to question. It is highly probable that it was the naturally conservative trend of British foreign policy that precluded the taking of vigorous measures in Egypt.

The question here is - What did Baldwin do between his dismissal and his departure from Egypt? For one thing, he facilitated the transmission of despatches from England to India. In September 1796, the French representative reported to his Government that 'Le citoyen Thainville, pendant son séjour au Caire, a vu arriver trois paquebots Anglais à Suez'.<sup>(88)</sup> Later, in 1801 Baldwin himself stated that in 1796 he had sent to Admiral Elphinstone in India the news of a Dutch

87. H.M.C. Dropmore Papers IV. P.P.2-5. 13 Jan. 1795.

88. Arch.nat.(Marine) et A Ambassade de France à Constantinople (Sept.1796). 16 fructidor an IV. Charles-Roux, 1'Angleterre, P.338.



squadron bound for Cape of Good Hope.<sup>(89)</sup> Dundas, up to August 1795, was still using the Overland route through Egypt as is obvious from his correspondence with Sir G. Elliot, the British representative at Bastia.<sup>(90)</sup> The pertinent question here is, how is it that Dundas, who knew of Baldwin's dismissal as early as February 1793, continued to use the overland route through Egypt without informing Baldwin of his dismissal? If this point could be cleared up, it is possible that the seemingly inexplicable delay in notifying Baldwin of his dismissal could be explained.

During this time, Hugh Cleghorn (formerly professor of Civil history at the University of St. Andrews) was on the continent and had become acquainted with Count Charles de Meuron of Neuchatel, Switzerland, colonel-proprietor of a regiment of 1,200 men stationed at Ceylon, in the service of the Dutch East India Company and under the command of his brother. The Count was ready to sell his regiment to the British service. On his return home, Cleghorn laid the plan before Dundas at the beginning of 1795, and in February the latter authorized Cleghorn to negotiate with the Count, and in case of success, ordered him to proceed to Ceylon, by the overland route through Egypt, taking the Count with him if possible.<sup>(91)</sup> In the middle of 1795, both Cleghorn and De

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89. Baldwin, Political recollections, P.29.

90. Melville MSS. 3112 No.50. Elliot to Dundas  
14 Aug. 1795 (Nat.Lib.Scot).

91. Furber, P.P.108-109.

Meuron arrived at Alexandria and at once visited Baldwin, who informed them that the Dutch consul was expecting despatches from Holland to be forwarded to the East. A plan was therefore formulated whereby Baldwin was either to bribe the Dutch consul, or to have the messenger whom the consul might send with despatches, seized and robbed of them in the desert.<sup>(92)</sup> The irony is that Baldwin, who was so full of complaints in 1779 about the seizure and robbery of British caravans by the Beys, had now agreed to play the robber himself.

Cleghorn was well-informed as far as the conditions in Egypt were concerned, thanks to Carlo Rosetti, to whom, Cleghorn, fascinated by his personality and convinced of his influence upon the Beys, gave a ready ear. He deceived himself as to his ability to become au fait with the subject of the British communications through Egypt and came to the conclusions that British individuals 'to gain their own objects.. improperly committed the name of government' and were responsible for the abuses connected with the attempts to establish the British communication through Egypt.<sup>(93)</sup> He thought that the treaty of 1794 between Great Britain and the Beys could not be implemented unless the British government treated the Beys with great solicitude.<sup>(94)</sup> He, therefore, suggested that Rosetti should be appointed as Baldwin's deputy in Cairo, partly

92. Cleghorn Papers. P.54. Cleghorn to Baldwin, 10 June 1795.

93. Ibid. P.60. Cleghorn to Dundas 17 June 1795.

94. Ibid. P.P.62-65. Cleghorn to Dundas 25 June 1795.



because the latter had a considerable influence over the Beys and partly because Baldwin was residing in Alexandria. Furthermore, the support and good treatment of the Beys should be bought. The influence of Rosetti is obvious in Cleghorn's accurate analysis of the characters of the two ruling Beys.<sup>(95)</sup> Cleghorn went on to investigate the possibilities of forming 'a connection between England and Egypt by which we may derive some important, and deprive France of some essential articles of commerce'. There had been a shortage of corn in England since 1793, and throughout the war with Revolutionary France.<sup>(96)</sup> Cleghorn, therefore, thought that Egypt could provide England with corn as well as salt-petre. Not only would the export be directly beneficial to the English war effort but also indirectly by depriving France of these commodities.<sup>(97)</sup> He suggested to Dundas that a contract be made, not with the Beys, but with Rosetti, who owned a large area of salt-petre on the bank of the Nile and was ready to supply England with 5,000 'quintals' per year, and he recommended Mr. Udney of Leghorn as the proper person to negotiate with Rosetti.<sup>(98)</sup> Apparently Cleghorn was convinced of the necessity of appeasing the Beys by every conceivable means in developing any connection between Egypt and England. Murad Bey's vessel having been captured in the Mediterranean by a Maltese privateer, Cleghorn, persuaded by Rosetti, thought that if the vessel could be returned to

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95. Ibid.

96. W. Cunningham, *The Growth of English Industry & Commerce in Modern Times. (Laissez Faire)* Cambridge 1921.

97. Cleghorn Papers, P.P.62-65. Cleghorn to Dundas 25 June 1795.

98. Ibid.

Murad through the efforts of a British consul or ministers of Malta, the event would result in pro-British sentiment among the Beys. On the 26th June 1795, therefore, he wrote to Sir W. Hamilton, British plenipotentiary at Naples informing him of the matter and asking him to do his utmost to return the vessel to Murad. 'I can assure you' he said in his letter, 'that the restoration of this ship, through the good offices of a British minister, may essentially contribute to strengthen and extend His Majesty's interests in Egypt... The extensive and I hope, the increasing possessions of England in the East, render a regular attention necessary on our part to the ruling powers here, and nothing at present would more facilitate our objects, and be more agreeable to Murad Bey than the restoration of this vessel, an object concerning which he seems to be extremely anxious'.<sup>(99)</sup>

The question of Egypt's supplying corn and salt-petre to Britain seem to have also occupied Baldwin's mind, almost at the same time. In the first place, he wrote to Richard Lee on the 18th June 1795 touching the possibility of exporting 500,000 'Kantars' of corn to England.<sup>(100)</sup> Both seem to have waited until September when the Nile flood determined the future of the harvest. On 3rd September, Baldwin wrote to Lee stating that the flood was very encouraging, and that the estimated amount could in fact be exported to England, and

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99. Ibid. P.66. Cleghorn to Hamilton 21 June 1795.

100. 18 June 1795. Chatham Papers, 111 & F.O. 24. Egypt I.



asking him to submit the proposals to the Privy Council.<sup>(101)</sup> Later, on 29th March 1796, Baldwin wrote to Grenville on the same subject.<sup>(102)</sup> He estimated the price of the 500,000 Kantars at £750,000 and suggested that he, with another (the choice of whom Baldwin left to Grenville) should act as agent on behalf of the British Government to effect the contract, which he stated would save England about £1,000,000. Moreover, he proposed to Grenville the necessity of obtaining a firman from the Porte giving permission to that effect. With presents amounting to £5,000, Baldwin thought that the Beys would willingly consent to the bargain. To counteract French intrigues against the plan and to protect the corn on its way to England, Baldwin advanced the necessity of the appearance of a few British frigates and a ship or two of the Line at Alexandria. At the same time, he wrote also to Pitt, but there is no evidence that all his projects even engaged the attention of the Cabinet.

Baldwin claimed that during this period (1795-1798) he foiled French schemes. The arrival of Magallon at Cairo as consul-general with considerable presents had little or no effect on the attitude of the Beys towards the French merchants in Egypt, who asked their government for intervention. The Revolution hardly changed the policy of France as far as Egypt was concerned. In Paris 'le Comité de Salut Extérieur~~es~~' examined the complaints of the French merchants in Egypt and ordered Descorches to appeal to the Porte to take measures.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid. In the same terms he wrote to Pitt on 29 March 1796 (Chatham Papers 361).

Furthermore they suggested to Magallon 'd'opérer dans L'esprit des beys une espèce de conversion'. Magallon, however, did not make any headway and in April 1795, departed for Alexandria with some French merchants. The new French Ambassador, Vernicac, was of opinion that measures should be taken to re-establish French trade in Cairo, to procure the indispensable guarantees to maintain the merchants' position, and finally to ask indemnities from the Beys. These were precisely the objectives of a mission delegated to an agent of the Comité de Salut Public,

M. Dubois-Thainville, who arrived at Alexandria on 20th October 1795.<sup>(103)</sup> Liston immediately wrote to Baldwin informing him of the French mission and asking him to be on his guard against its design, which he thought to be the appropriation of the Suez-Indian trade for the Republic.

'Mais il était naturel qu'en pleine guerre européenne, à la quelle l'Angleterre participait contre la France, la mission d'un Français en Egypte ranimât chez un diplomate anglais le classique soupçon d'une tentative française pour communiquer avec l'Inde par Suez', writes M. Charles-Roux.<sup>(104)</sup>

It was not, however, merely a question of war, but rather British sensitiveness to any French competition in the Indian trade that caused the British agents at Constantinople and Cairo to take all the French activities in Egypt during the 18th

103. Charles-Roux, l'Angleterre...etc. P.P.336-339.

104. Ibid. P.336.



century as directed against British trade in India. 'In 1796', wrote Baldwin, 'I had to counteract a public mission entrusted to the agency of Tinville,...who arrived in Cairo expressly to inveigle the Beys of Egypt into the designs of the French, and particularly to obtain consent to their project of passing an army through Egypt, to the East Indies, by the Red Sea, in order to strengthen Tippoo, and finally to annihilate the British dominions in the East Indies: and I did counteract it'.<sup>(105)</sup> Since we know that he was mistaken even with regard to the objects of the missions, his statement should be treated with considerable reserve, particularly as it was written in 1801, after the French Expedition had taken place, that is, at a time when the objective of French designs was commonly accepted as India.

Thainville's mission did not succeed. Magallon, after repeated letters of complaints to his government, of the maltreatment of the Beys, left the country in July 1797, and arrived in Paris in October, when the preliminaries of Campo-Formio were taking place. On 9th February 1798 he presented his, now famous, report on the possession of Egypt, declaring that this was the best means of destroying British power in the East.

Like Magallon, Baldwin was no less convinced that co-operations with the Beys was practically negligible. In

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105. Political Recollections, P.P.29-30.

April 1798 he wrote to the British Charge d'affairs at Constantinople; 'I do not conceive that Egypt can be much longer tenable by the Franks owing to the excessive tyranny of Murad Bey, who latterly has given them to understand in practice and by his satellite Koraim in Alexandria in public declaration that the Consuls are nothing to him, and that he shall exact and extort as in fact he has done without respect to anyone. The same spirit invades the whole body of Mamelukes'. His personal tragedy came to its climax when he left Alexandria in April, old, nearly blind, and suffering from leg infection. On his way home via Trieste, he wrote a touching letter to Dundas, in which he expressed confidence in him as a friend who would not see him harmed, and attributed all his troubles to the failure of Grenville's despatch to reach him. The letter concluded with a warning that Napoleon was bound for Egypt, where he would most certainly succeed unless Nelson should checkmate him.<sup>(107)</sup> In a filthy lazaretto at Trieste, he assessed his many years' work in Egypt as doomed to certain failure. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Nelson anxiously in search of the French Squadron, arrived at Alexandria to find no British consul there.

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106. F.O. Turkey 21. 19 April 1798.

107. Mel. MSS. Lot 754. Baldwin to Dundas, Trieste, July 6, 1798. Quoted from Furber, Henry Dundas, P.118. This MSS is in the possession of Professor Furber in America. He, however, mentions (P.118) that Baldwin thought of 'his forty years work in Egypt'. I do not know whether he quoted this from the MSS or that it was his own statement. At any rate Baldwin became interested in Egypt in 1773.



CHAPTER IX.Growth of British policy towards the Ottoman Empire.

As full of port as we are full of pride  
 On Christ we trample with gigantic stride,  
 For Turks we'll borrow till we've nought to pay  
 Then Turks their love for Britons will display.

(Gentlemen's Magazine 1791, Vol.Ixi.II.)  
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The history of the British policy towards Turkey could be examined through the development of their embassy at Constantinople.<sup>(1)</sup> The British Ambassador was essentially the agent of the Levant Company. He had to protect the interest of its factors, to see that the Capitulations were implemented and to try to obtain more commercial advantages for British subjects. He was paid, and actually appointed, by the Company. To give him more power to withstand the intrigues of the French, by diplomatic status, he was ostensibly regarded as His Majesty's representative at the Sublime Porte. The dual aspect of his embassy and its development in the 17th and 18th centuries provoked the quarrel between the Company and the Crown through the latter's interference.<sup>(2)</sup> At first the Crown's intervention to make appointments was due to the fact that the position was financially profitable and many of the Ambassadors accepted office to defray their debts by the high salaries paid by the Company, the selling of Barats and

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1. A.C.Wood, English Hist. Rev.Vol.XL. 1925.  
 The English Embassy at Constantinople 1660-1762. P.P.533-561.
  2. Ibid.

different protections and the amount of money paid by the Porte to foreign representatives. The diplomatic aspect of their mission was to report on the situation at Constantinople and to act as mediators between Turkey and Russia or Austria, all of which might gain British good favour at the Porte or commercial advantages for the British Levant Company. During the 18th century, with the development of the diplomatic position of the embassy, the situation facing the British Ambassador and his staff gradually became more critical, since they had to deal with two interests which collided more often than not. Since 1691, the Company had been practically deprived by the Crown of the power of appointing Ambassadors at Constantinople. However in 1803, the Government took over the complete appointment and maintenance of the embassy, a change due to the situation caused by the French Expedition to Egypt.

The year 1688 brought the Ottoman Empire within the orbit of British foreign policy. England was at war with France on the issue of the Grand Alliance (1689-1697) and William III urgently desired to secure peace between the Porte and the Emperor so that the latter might be free to throw all his force against France; and for the next nine years a fierce struggle for supremacy in Constantinople between the French ambassador and the ministers of England and Holland took place. The predominating French influence at Constantinople, coupled with the combined hostility of France and Turkey against Austria brought about the failure of Trumbull, the British



Ambassador. 'T'is certain this Empire at present is more governed by the French than the Turkish interest,'<sup>(3)</sup> he wrote to his Government. Lord Paget, the Ambassador at Vienna was ordered to leave for Turkey with all speed.<sup>(4)</sup> Although his mission was not altogether successful, he nevertheless played a significant part in the peace conference of Karlowitz (1698). From that time, the fact that British policy became more and more involved in European questions, naturally helped to bring Turkey within the scope of that policy. But it did so only as an auxiliary to the solution of more pressing diplomatic problems and not as a question of outstanding importance in itself. In 1716 England was trying to secure peace between the Porte and the Emperor so that the latter would be free to deal with the new crisis which threatened to develop in Italy between him and Philip V of Spain.<sup>(5)</sup> Between 1719 and 1726 the British Ambassador at Constantinople was instructed to persuade the Turks to wage war against Russia to divert the latter's attention from the Baltic trade and the question of Hanover. Furthermore during the Seven Years' War, Pitt, the elder, who might have been 'quite a Ross' did not hesitate to incorporate the Turks in his all embracing plan of campaign against France. Hence British diplomacy at Constantinople was struggling for a defensive and offensive alliance between

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3. State Papers, Foreign, Turkey, 20. Trumbull to Shrewsbury 1 July 1690.

4. Brit. Mus. Add. MSS. 8880, F.O. 66.

5. Wood, The English Embassy, P.P. 549-550.

Prussia and the Porte. British diplomacy at Constantinople during 1688-1760, was on the whole a story of unavailing effort and failure. This failure was not due to any personal deficiency in her representative, but rather to the nature of the policy they were obliged to sustain at the Porte. English political interest in Turkey was limited to the reaction of England's policy to the neighbouring Powers of the Porte, friendly or hostile, but the reaction those Powers might have had on the welfare or even on the continued existence of Turkey itself was hardly considered until the latter's preservation became necessary in the 19th century for the protection of British interests in the Near East and India. Because its policy was based on the established hostility to France in the 18th century and friendship with the Empire, England was, of necessity opposed to the true interests of the Porte, whose policy regarded France as the traditional friend and Austria the traditional enemy. This partly explains why a man like Lord Paget failed in his attempt to arrange an understanding between the Porte and the Emperor, to serve the ulterior motives of his sovereign. The British attitude to Russia between 1719 and 1726 was due to exceptional circumstances and was more a Hanoverian than a British policy. Britain, in general, favoured Russia because of the rich Baltic trade. While trade with Russia was flourishing, the Levant Company's trade was diminishing throughout the century. So long, therefore as commerce remained the chief motive of Britain's policy, she



naturally favoured Russia rather than Turkey. (6)

The period between 1760 and 1798 forms a transition between a diehard pro-Russian policy which characterized the period prior to 1760, and the 19th century British 'status quo' of the Eastern Question. This period saw the turning point in the history of the British Empire as a result of the treaty of Versailles (1783). In 1763 this Empire was for the most part Anglo-Saxon in population, and primarily colonial in character, while its centre overseas was in America; in 1783 the balance of interest and power was shifted towards the East; in Bengal was the only great dependent population, and of Anglo-Saxon colonies, England had only the West-Indies, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. With the Imperial scale now tipped in favour of the East, British trade and political responsibilities in Asia became England's greatest interest overseas. The affairs of India were constantly before both Parliament and the public. England

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6. During the Turko-Russian war of 1769-74, the Russian fleet which nearly took Constantinople and destroyed the Turkish Navy at Teheleme in 1770\*, was largely under the direction of English officers. On the eve of the fatal treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji, Vergennes quickly consulted with Great Britain, proposing that she should join in remonstrances against the acquisition of Tartary and Crimea by Russia. 'I was one of His Majesty's ministers at that time' said Mr. Fox in the Commons late in 1791, 'and the answer which I advised was, that His Majesty would not make any remonstrances on the subject, or throw any difficulty in the way of the Empress'. France declined to attack Russia single-handed.

\* W. Miller, The Ottoman Empire and its successors,

1801-1927. Cambridge 1927, P.14.

\*\* Hansard's Parliamentary History, Vol.29.1791-92. P.63.

in this decade definitely and deliberately accepted responsibilities in India. To safeguard the communications with its possessions in Asia was now the principal naval problem, to protect and extend these possessions the chief military task. This trend brought out immediately the significance of the Near East not so much for its trade, but as a route between Europe and the East. Particularly between 1788 and 1792, France seemed a less formidable rival, and a new danger loomed up in Russia with her responsibilities of overland communication into central Asia. This coming change soon cast a faint shadow before it, for while France offered no help to Tipu Saheb in 1788 when the struggle in Southern India was renewed, Catherine II was considering a proposal to send a force from the Caspian Sea to attack the British in Bengal.<sup>(7)</sup> Only the Tories were conscious of these emerging factors. But the Whig standpoint of Burke together with the evangelical movement were typical in their anti-Turkish attitude. Again the old keynote to British foreign and imperial policy was still trade and the Baltic trade with Russia was evidently indispensable. No wonder, then, when the crisis of Oczakov (1791) developed to decide whether Britain would attack Russia to defend Turkey, the British

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7. Cambridge History of the British Empire,  
Vol. II. P.48.



Cabinet and British public opinion was completely divided.

Catherine's famous tour in Southern Russia in 1787 was closed with a Turkish ultimatum and with opening of hostilities in the same year. At the end of 1788 Oczakov was taken by the Russians and the heart of the Turkish Empire was opened to the invaders. But the policy of the 'Triple Alliance' was a 'status quo' in the Baltic and the pacification of the Near East. This implied the restoration of power in Eastern Europe without allowing Russia to retain Oczakov. In March 1791 the British Cabinet sent an ultimatum to Russia, namely the restoration of all her conquered territory, exclusive of the Crimea, to the Porte. It is unnecessary to go into detail concerning the views of Pitt's supporters and opposers, which eventually brought about Pitt's failure. An attempt, however, will be made here to introduce the most significant arguments of both.

Contemporary press and parliamentary debates make it clear that three factors were pre-eminent in influencing that section of the public which supported Pitt. In the first place Russian progress in the Black Sea and Mediterranean would open the way for trade with foreign consumers, and those regions would become subject to Russian Navigation laws. The Public Advisor, a Tory newspaper, was more concerned about the balance of power both in Europe and the Mediterranean. On 12th January, 1791 that newspaper suggested in her article on Russia that she 'is a power than can, and that does, threaten all Europe. She is a power, if not

checked in her present progress against the Turks, will gain in a very few years a maritime ascendancy in Europe... England, France, Spain and Holland have a material interest against her, and it is astonishing that as yet no absolute measures have been adopted in support of the Turks. England cannot, and will not longer stand neuter, in any opposition she may make to Russia'. The St. James's Chronicle<sup>(8)</sup> (or British Evening Post) suggested that England could draw closer to Turkey over that incident and take the heritage of France in the Near East before its recovery after the Revolution. Furthermore the economic future of Russia promised to be far more formidable to English exporters than that of Turkey since the latter could never become self-sufficient either in production or as a carrier, and was too weak to awake fear or envy.<sup>(9)</sup> The third factor was the future of Egypt. Captain Sutherland, a traveller in the Levant, published a pamphlet in 1790<sup>(10)</sup> on his journey from Gibraltar to Constantinople, in which he expressed his views on the Turko-Russian war. Working on the assumption that France would let Russia and Austria work their will on Turkey, so that she would find an easy acquisition of the Island of Candia and Egypt, Sutherland believed that England would 'bid adieu' to the trade of the Levant, and in 'short time' by the easy communication with the French will establish with the East India, by the way of the

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8. April 7, 1791.

9. J. Ewart, Observations on the Nature of the Connection that has hitherto subsisted between Great Britain and Russia 1791.

10. Account of a Tour up the Straits from Gibraltar to Constantinople.



Isthmus of Suez, they will give a fatal blow to our India trade also'.<sup>(11)</sup> To counteract these schemes, he suggested a combined action between England, Spain and Turkey in the Mediterranean against Russia. In the House of Commons, Lord Bulgrave expressed his apprehension that Russia might effect 'the entire supremacy of the Mediterranean' by seizing Alexandria after passing the Dardenelles.<sup>(12)</sup> One of the very interesting surveys which dealt with the future of Egypt, is that of Sir John Dalrymple, baron of the exchequer. He was not in favour of Pitt's Russian policy.<sup>(13)</sup> He put the commercial advantages, notably from the Baltic, as an argument against a rupture with Russia. If England, however, went to war to save Turkey, she must be rewarded for the part in the alliance by beneficial treaties and the 'custodiary possession of Egypt'. Sir John Dalrymple was one of the many political writers of the time who were fully conscious of the necessity of a bold British policy in the East, for the preservation and extension of the Empire, as a compensation for her losses in the American War of Independence. He thought that England might find another market, therefore, in tobacco which she had lost in the Chesapeake Bay, and rice and indigo which she had lost in the Carolines. Furthermore, he pointed out the necessity of developing trade through the Red Sea to and from India. He went on to suggest a plan for ruling Egypt. Egypt would be

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11. Ibid.

12. Hansard, Vol.29. P.180.

13. Queries, P.P.75-85.

a Turkish province, The Grand Signior would be contented with taxes amounting to £130,000 a year (which he never got from the Beys) and 150,000 tons of grain. England would establish 'a great military station' in Egypt not only to defend the country but also to give assistance to British India if needed.

Furthermore, the British project for opening Egypt and the Red Sea for British communication between England and India was involved. George Baldwin, the British consul in Egypt,<sup>(14)</sup> and Captain Taylor,<sup>(15)</sup> a very concerned man about that project, thought that England could find an easy consent from the Porte for the British plan if England would support Turkey against Russia. The Public Adviser, wrote on 29th April 1791 on this question. It suggested that England would procure the navigation of the Black and the Red Seas in return for her services to the Porte. 'By the navigation of the Red Sea, Great Britain designs to trade from the Indies by the straits of Suez, by transporting its merchandizes from thence by land as far as the port of Alexandria, from whence they will be forwarded to Europe, in other ships. By these means England can not only give a greater scope to her establishments at Cadahar and Bassora, but also extend her commerce throughout Persia, as far as the Black Sea, her intention being to establish factories in the coasts of Asia'. The newspaper went on to propound obstacles that existed in the way of such

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14. F.O.78 Turkey 16. Liston to Grenville 24 Jan. 1795.

15. I.O.H.M. 4.36(2). Taylor, J. to Abercrombie 1790.



a project; 'However, this project affords great uneasiness to our principal commercial houses (presumably the Levant and the East India Companies), as it would give a very bad turn both to our trade, and to that which other nations have hitherto carried on to the Indies'.

The arguments of Pitt's supporters were not convincing to the majority of the British public. There were weak points in Pitt's attitude. Neither he, nor the Duke of Leeds, the Foreign Secretary, knew what exactly the Russian ambitions were. Furthermore, Pitt said very little to explain his motion against Russia. The Annual Register of 1791 asserted, with justification, that Pitt might have carried through his scheme for intervention between Russia and Turkey, in spite of the Whigs, 'had he been at liberty to divulge all he then knew of the danger hanging over the North, which subsequent events have unfolded to the world'.<sup>(16)</sup> One of the reasons why public opinion opposed Pitt was the prospect of new taxes after the last war with Spain. Another more obvious was the indispensable Baltic trade with Russia. The average Briton looked calmly at the volume of trade carried on with each of the two belligerent powers, and decided that Russian friendship was more profitable than Turkish. The Morning Chronicle criticised the policy of impoverishing 'our best customers' 'for it is a truth that will not be denied, that Russia takes off more of our manufactures, and gives

employment to more British hands, than the Thirteen States of America ever did when they were our own colonies'.<sup>(17)</sup>

The number of British subjects employed in Russia should indeed have helped to draw the two nations together. John Elphinston, Grieg, Truvenan and Dugdale were pioneers of Catherine's naval power. Catherine's court banker was a Scotsman called Sutherland, and her doctor an Englishman called Rogerson. An Englishwoman, Maria Guthrie, was the 'directress of the Imperial convent for the education of the female nobility of Russia'.<sup>(18)</sup>

A third factor in English public opinion which was utilized in stirring up agitation against Pitt was a religious one. The evangelical movement gave an added glow to the rhetorical conservatism of Burke. In 1791 it was a Whig weapon. A few years later, it helped Pitt in his war with revolutionary France. The author or authors of 'Short Seasonable Hint' 1791 pointed out the 'grievous and ignominious slavery',<sup>(19)</sup> of the Christian people subject to the Turks. The author of 'an address to the people of England' 1791 protested against deserting old allies in order to join 'the enemies of the Christian name'.<sup>(20)</sup>

In the Lords, on the 29th of March, though the motion was condemned by Fitzwilliam, Porchester, Carlisle, Starmont and Lansdowne, the Cabinet won the votes of 97 to 34.<sup>(21)</sup> On the

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17. 19 April 1791.

18. G.B.Hertz, British Imperialism in the 18th century. P.186. London 1908.

19. P.9.

20. P.11.

21. Hansard, Vol.29. P.52.



same day, the House of Commons was no less agitated. Fox<sup>(22)</sup> remarked that Britain exported £400,000 worth of goods every year to Russia, and imported from her 2,500,000 worth, of which the bulk was carried on English ships. He was equally realistic when he pointed out that England could not enter a war for a town, the importance of which was a matter of opinion, and was far less important acquisition to Russia, than the Crimea or Kherson. Burke was still a Whig in his contempt for Turkey. He said that Turkey as a balance of power in Europe should be disregarded. 'What had these worse than savages to do with the powers of Europe, but to spread war, destruction, and pestilence amongst them?... All that was holy in religion, all that was moral and humane, demanded an abhorrence of every thing which tended to extend the power of that cruel and wasteful empire. Any Christian was to be preferred to these destructive savages'.<sup>(23)</sup> By 228 votes to 135 the Government won the day.

On 1st April, Fitzwilliam asked the Lords to condemn the policy of rescuing any Turkish territory from Russia; Catherine II and Tipu Saheb were both champions of struggling nationalities. On the 12th, Grey moved eight resolutions in the Commons as to the inexpediency and folly of the armament against Russia. Sheridan was sick of the parrot cry 'confidence! confidence', Ministers did not deserve it. On 15th April, Fox seemed to have troubled Burke and his

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22. Ibid. P.P.63-70.

23. Ibid. P.77.

conservative allies by introducing his appreciation of the revolutionary movement in France. The Government's majority on a division was 92.

The question is - why did Pitt withdraw after having a majority on each occasion? Firstly it was obvious that the opposition was powerful, and Pitt must have foreseen that his majority would eventually fail him. Secondly there was a sharp disagreement inside the Cabinet. The Memoranda of the Duke of Leeds vividly tells the story. The policy was Pitt's and his 'clerk', the Foreign Secretary. Grenville was a doubtful factor from the beginning. On 30th March, Richmond warned Leeds that the country would desert the Ministry if it persisted in its policy.<sup>(24)</sup> Leeds answered that it was too late to give way. In the evening, the Cabinet met again. Richmond, Stafford and Grenville were on the side of non-intervention. Next day, there were only Leeds and Lord Chatham to support Pitt. 'I went up to the chimney' writes Leeds, 'and stirring the fire, observed that as it was probably the last time I should have to do the honours of that room, I thought it particularly incumbent upon me to have a good fire for my company'.<sup>(25)</sup> Richmond and Stafford asked weakly 'Good God, what d'ye mean?'. Leeds said he took it for granted that the Government's intimation of active

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24. Leeds' Political Memoranda (ed. 1884) P.P. 152-54.

25. Ibid. P. 156.



help to Prussia was to be cancelled, 'in which case I should think myself obliged to make my bow'.<sup>(26)</sup> He and Chatham alone supported Pitt; Thurlow, who had previously appeared loyal, now 'either actually was or pretended to be asleep'. Pitt had to yield reluctantly to his colleagues. Thus failed the first British attempt to oppose Russian progress in the heart of the Ottoman Empire.

The French Expedition to Egypt (1798-1801) laid the foundation of the 19th century British policy towards the Ottoman Empire. The 'status quo' of the Empire was the best assurance not only for avoiding a European crisis but also for British political and military intervention to preserve this 'status quo'. The development of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century confirmed this British Near Eastern policy. But the first Turko-British Alliance of 1799, which came as a result of the French Expedition to Egypt, had within it the germs of its death. The Porte was involved in an alliance with its hereditary enemies and exposed the security of the <sup>e</sup>heart of the Empire to the menace of Russian and Austrian troops marching ostensibly to its succour. No mutual co-operation ever *turned* to be successful between the Turks and the British in military action against the French in Egypt. Koehler's <sup>(27)</sup> mission

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26. Ibid.

27. 18 Oct. Dropmore Papers, V. P.476.

at Constantinople for training the Turkish army was a failure, and the Porte finally entrusted him with the fortification of the Dardenelles. Sidney Smith found the Turkish army would fight one battle and then become a group of 'bandits'. It was not the Turks who expelled the French, but simply the British Army and Navy.

Neither did Britain seem to have been able to exploit its alliance with Turkey. The alliance had indeed changed the nature of the British embassy from being originally a commercial establishment into a diplomatic one, but beyond this nothing seems to have been implemented. In overestimating the repercussions of the French Expedition on British influence in the Levant, modern historians seem to disregard the essentially conservative British policy at the turn of the 18th century. It was the active far-seeing and ambitious statecraft of France which opened up new avenues of strife and ambition, while Britons followed, doubtfully at first, but in the long run, doggedly. Dupleix, Montcalm, and Napoleon -to mention the greatest names- precipitated a conflict which was ultimately to turn to the profit of the Sea Power and to plant the Union Jack in many lands.<sup>(28)</sup> There can be no better illustration of that conservative characteristic of the British foreign policy than the scrupulous abstention from exploiting the Turko-British alliance for commercial

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28. Polissier, *Histoire de la Diplomatie française dans le Levant*. Arch. Aff. et Turquie. Mémoires et Documents, 63, p.125.



privileges in the Levant. Lord Elgin, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, refrained from seeking openings for British trade, either in the Red or the Black Seas. In point of fact, Britain did not press the demand for permission to navigate in the latter sea until after France had obtained it by her treaty with Turkey of 1802.

Neither was Britain able to exploit its first occupation of Egypt. Its policy was that Egypt 'must not remain in active state or in active hands'. Its method was strengthening Egypt militarily under British guidance. Its scheme for the future of Egypt had from the outset no chance. In general, there were two British points of view. The commanders of the British Army in Egypt were convinced that the Turks could not defend Egypt against a possible French invasion. Therefore, they, i.e., the commanders, pinned their faith on the Beys as a military organization as well as bona fide friends of Britain.<sup>(29)</sup> The British representatives at Constantinople looked at the question from a different angle. The attitude of the British commanders in Egypt, these diplomatic representatives thought, would endanger the Anglo-Turkish alliance and render the Turks more inclined for a settlement with France.<sup>(30)</sup> The British Cabinet wavered between

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29. Ghorbal, Sh. The beginnings of the Egyptian Question & the Rise of Mehemet Ali. Ch.X. P.P. 155-183.

30. Ibid.

one point of view or the other, undecisive and with obvious weakness, most characteristic of Addington's administration. The net result was a failure in the first British interference in the internal affairs of Egypt. The British scheme (1801)<sup>(31)</sup> for the settlement of Egypt bore the cachet of the practical; it burnt no incense to liberty or to equality and omitted to theorise on 'feudal principle' or *impôt unique*. It was the first authoritative pronouncement on the problem of Egypt. The British ministers summed up the condition of Egypt prior to 1793 in three facts: the sovereignty of the Porte was nominal, the Beys were masters of the situation, the people were most wretched. To prevent the recurrence of a foreign invasion the Porte should carry out the following measures; Great Britain being inclined to take part in the arrangement.

1. The rights, privileges and territorial jurisdiction of the Mamelukes should be ascertained, the nature and extent of their military services should be defined and the performance of that service should be made the condition of their tenure.
2. The revenues of the State, from all sources, should be placed under fixed regulations, the 'rates and proportions' to be paid to the State under each head should be established and the collectors should be severely punished if they exacted

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31. Hobart to Hutchinson, 12 Oct. 1801. W.O.6, 21.



more than was due.

3. A fixed portion of the revenue should be appropriated for the pay and disbursements of the regular military force to be formed under the direction of British officers.
4. The 'nizamia'<sup>(32)</sup> troops now serving in Egypt should remain there and form the nucleus of the new establishment.
5. The remainder of the establishment should be recruited in Egypt, Albania and other European dominions of the Grand Signior.
6. The chief command should be vested, if possible, in a British officer, and no payments from the appropriated funds should be made without his orders.
7. The Commander should have the power to make 'respectful remonstrances' to the representatives of the Porte in Egypt whenever the privileges of the Mamelukes, the recognized rights of the people, the collection or the application of the military funds were infringed.

There could have been no fairer and more beneficial a settlement than this.<sup>(33)</sup> But the many clashing interests

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32. This reveals the common mistake that Egyptian society was feudal.

33. The second British scheme for settling the problem of Egypt was the famous Dufferin report of 1883. A comparison between the two reveals how much the external development of Egypt had brought the British interest directly and vigorously in interfering in the internal affairs of Egypt. During these eighty-two years, Egypt witnessed the expulsion of the Turks, the building up of the 'viceroys' power, the change of the society from a heterogeneous elements into a compact nation, the accumulation of debt which brought into its wake a severe foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Egypt, and the growth of a foreign powerful clientele. While the first scheme tried to make the British occupation unnecessary, Dufferin's report tried to show that British direct intervention was inevitable.

were too difficult to reconcile. The Beys aimed at restoring their position prior to 1798, the Turks on the other hand were determined to establish their sovereignty, proper.

The outstanding example of the failure of British diplomacy in the Levant was the treaty of Galeb which was concluded separately between France and Turkey. By this treaty, Napoleon was aiming at defeating British diplomacy by depriving it of all the advantages which her occupation of Egypt ought to have conferred upon her. In this he used Russia as his means. Britain was definitely mistaken in not insisting upon a Turkish Plenipotentiary in the Congress of Amiens. She was again mistaken in refusing Russian mediation in the settlement between Turkey and France. Both blunders enabled Napoleon to succeed in his policy of depriving both Russia and Britain of the strong position in Constantinople which the Expedition to Egypt had enabled them to occupy, and to regain for France the place which her attempt to seize Egypt had caused her to lose. 'I am anxious to declare positively' Lord Elgin wrote home 'as a conviction stamped upon my mind by the whole of this transaction, that Great Britain, in pursuing her general principles of politics, can never attempt to maintain a preponderating influence here or rely on any favour or return from hence for supporting this country after France shall resume her position and connection in Europe' (34)



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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم : عجائب الآثار : من تاريخ وادب : طبع في دار المطبعات الخيرية في القاهرة سنة ١٢٩٠

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---oOo---



APPENDIX I.

Members of the Egyptian Society (1741-43).

- |      |                                                                                                                |                |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| *1.  | John, Earl of Sandwich.                                                                                        | (Sheik)        |
| *2.  | Dr. R. Pococke                                                                                                 | (Reis Effendi) |
| *3.  | Capt. F. L. Norden                                                                                             |                |
| *4.  | Dr. Ch. Perry.                                                                                                 |                |
| *5.  | Dr. Th. Shaw.                                                                                                  |                |
| *6.  | Col. W. Leithieulleur.                                                                                         |                |
| *7.  | Th. Lisle.                                                                                                     |                |
| 8.   | Ch. Stanhope.                                                                                                  |                |
| 9.   | M. Folkes.                                                                                                     |                |
| 10.  | Dr. W. Stukeley.                                                                                               |                |
| 11.  | Dr. Th. Dampier.                                                                                               |                |
| 12.  | Dr. J. Milles                                                                                                  | (Reis Effendi) |
| 13.  | The Duke of Montague.                                                                                          |                |
| 14.  | The Duke of Richmond.                                                                                          |                |
| 15.  | A. Mitchell                                                                                                    | (Hasnadar)     |
| 16.  | Dr. C. Barton.                                                                                                 |                |
| 17.  | S. Leithieulleur.                                                                                              | (Gumrouc jee)  |
| 18.  | D. Wray.                                                                                                       |                |
| 19.  | E. Legge.                                                                                                      |                |
| 20.  | Lord Lovell.                                                                                                   |                |
| 21.  | Th. Hill.                                                                                                      |                |
| 22.  | W. Fauquier.                                                                                                   | (Mohausil)     |
| 23.  | The Earl of Lincoln.                                                                                           |                |
| 24.  | Lord Duncannon.                                                                                                |                |
| 25.  | W. Bristow.                                                                                                    |                |
| 26.  | ? Coke (Probably Edward Coke who was interested in Antiquities, and mentioned in Gordon's twenty-five plates). |                |
| 27.  | G. Shelvocke.                                                                                                  |                |
| 28.  | Sir Everard Falkener.                                                                                          |                |
| 29.  | W. Montague.                                                                                                   |                |
| 30.  | S. Desrolles.                                                                                                  |                |
| 31.  | J. Mackay.                                                                                                     |                |
| 32.  | Th. Anson.                                                                                                     |                |
| *33. | Edward Vernon.                                                                                                 |                |
| *34. | ? Frolocke.                                                                                                    |                |
| 35.  | Dr. Ays Cough.                                                                                                 |                |

\* those who visited Egypt.

APPENDIX II.

BRITISH CONSULS AND REPRESENTATIVES IN EGYPT.

1583 - 1757.

|                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Harvey Millers.                     | 1583 - 85 ? |
| Paulo Mariani.                      | 1585 - 86   |
| No consul (Under French protection) | 1586 - 1600 |
| Benjamin Bishop                     | 1600 - 1    |
| No consul (Under French protection) | 1601 - 52   |
| Abbot (unofficial)                  | 1652 - 57   |
| Bendysh (unofficial)                | 1657 - 64   |
| No consul (Under French protection) | 1664 - 98   |
| Miles Fleetwood                     | 1698 - 1704 |
| Walter Merchant                     | 1704 - 6    |
| William Walters                     | 1706 - 7    |
| William Farrington                  | 1707 - 19   |
| Stephen Moore                       | 1719 - 21   |
| Philip Wheake                       | 1721 - 31   |
| Robert Barton                       | 1731 - 50   |
| Richard Harris                      | 1751 - 7    |



APPENDIX III.

BRITISH CONSULS AND REPRESENTATIVES IN EGYPT.

1775 - 1802.

|                                                     |                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| George Baldwin (Agent of the<br>East India Company) | 1775 - 1779                                                                                    |
| No Consul or representative                         | 1779 - 1785                                                                                    |
| George Baldwin (Consul)                             | 1786 - 1793<br>(Dismissed in 1793.<br>The Order reached<br>him 1796. Left<br>Egypt March 1798) |
| No consul                                           | 1793 - 1803                                                                                    |

APPENDIX IV. (~~Part I~~)

BRITISH DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

1775 - 1803.

|                                    |                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| John Murray (Ambassador)           | 1765 - 75                                                                                               |
| Anthony Hayes (Charge d'affaires)  | May 1775 - Oct. 1776                                                                                    |
| Sir Robert Ainslie (Ambassador)    | 1775 - 94                                                                                               |
| Robert Liston (Ambassador)         | 1794 - 5                                                                                                |
| Spencer Smith (Charge d'affaires)  | Nov. 1795 - Dec. 1799.                                                                                  |
| Francis James Jackson (Ambassador) | Appointed July 1799.<br>Resigned <del>by</del> <del>May</del> 1798<br>without taking up<br>appointment. |
| Thomas, Earl of Elgin (Ambassador) | 1799 - 1803                                                                                             |



V.  
APPENDIX ~~II~~. (Part 2)

| YEAR | OTTOMAN SULTANS<br>CONTEMPORARY EVENTS | THE PASHAS OF EGYPT     |
|------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1785 | Cassas' Journey                        | Mehemet Yeken           |
| 1786 |                                        | Abdi                    |
| 1788 | Selim III                              |                         |
| 1789 | French Revolution                      | Ismail el-Tunisi        |
| 1791 |                                        | Mehemet Izzet           |
| 1792 | Browne's Journey                       |                         |
| 1794 |                                        | Salih                   |
| 1795 | Olivier's Journey                      |                         |
| 1796 |                                        | Seyyid Ebu-Bekr (Behir) |
| 1798 |                                        |                         |

3rd July 1798 Debarkation of Bonapart  
at Alexandria

APPENDIX V.

LIST OF THE SULTANS AND THE PASHAS

1768 - 1798

| YEAR    | OTTOMAN SULTANS &<br>CONTEMPORARY EVENTS  | THE PASHAS OF EGYPT               |
|---------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1768    | Turko-Russian Wars                        | Ali Bey's Independence            |
| 1768-73 | Bruce's Journey                           |                                   |
| 1769    |                                           | Hafiz Ahmed (Murdered on arrival) |
| 1770    | Ante's Journey in Egypt                   |                                   |
| 1772    |                                           | Hasan                             |
| 1773    |                                           | The Death of Ali Bey              |
| 1773    | Abd-El-Hamid I                            | Khalil                            |
| 1774    | The Treaty of Kainardji                   | Mustafa al-Nabulsi                |
| 1775    |                                           | The Death of Mohamed Abu Dhahab   |
| 1776-7  | de Tott's Journey, Sonnini, Savary, Irwin | Vizir Mehmet Izzet                |
| 1778    |                                           | Ismail                            |
| 1779    | Capper's Journey                          |                                   |
| 1781    |                                           | Melek Ahmed                       |
| 1782    |                                           | Sheriff Ali                       |
| 1783    | Volney's Journey (83-85)                  |                                   |
| 1783    |                                           | Mehemet                           |



# APPENDIX VI(A)

## Route to India by Suez.

From London to Marseilles 7, to Alexandria 8, Suez 6, Bombay 25.

|                |    |    |    |    |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|
|                | 7  | 15 | 21 | 46 |
| Leghorn        | 12 | 27 | 33 | 58 |
| Venice         | 12 | 30 | 36 | 68 |
| Constantinople | 24 | 32 | 38 | 63 |

### By another Calculation

|             |                        |    |
|-------------|------------------------|----|
| From London | By Marseilles to India | 63 |
|             | Leghorn                | 83 |
|             | Constantinople         | 83 |

The shortest Date I find of Letters received at Cairo  
from London is 34 days

### Route to India by Bussorah

|                                      |          |           |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| London to Aleppo (by Constantinople) | Bussorah | to Bombay |
| 50                                   | 68       | 98        |
| To Venice                            | 13       |           |
| Venice to Latichea                   | 20       |           |
| Latichea to Aleppo                   | 3        |           |
| to Bussorah                          | 18       |           |
| to Bombay                            | 30       | 84        |

### From India by the Red Sea

|            |            |            |     |
|------------|------------|------------|-----|
| To Suez 45 | Cairo 3    | England 45 |     |
| 45         | 48         |            | 93  |
|            | Smyrna 15  | 35         | 98  |
|            | Leghorn 45 | 12         | 105 |

(1)

[illegible]



APPENDIX VI(B)  
Passages to India

(2)

| September to    | Bombay   |         |      |    | Madras   |         |      |    | Bengal   |         |      |    |
|-----------------|----------|---------|------|----|----------|---------|------|----|----------|---------|------|----|
|                 | Shortest | Longest | Mean | No | Shortest | Longest | Mean | No | Shortest | Longest | Mean | No |
| By Bussorah     | 118      | 219     | 165  | 3  | 191      | "       | "    | 1  | 203      | 208     | 205  | 2  |
| By Suez         | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea          | "        | "       | "    | "  | 210      | 217     | 213  | 2  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| <u>October</u>  |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah     | 217      | "       | "    | 1  | 248      | "       | "    | 1  | 185      | "       | "    | 1  |
| By Suez         | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea          | "        | "       | "    | "  | 134      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| <u>November</u> |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah     | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Suez         | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea          | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| <u>December</u> |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah     | 169      | "       | "    | 1  | 148      | 190     | 169  | 2  | 219      | "       | "    | 1  |
| By Suez         | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea          | "        | "       | "    | "  | 147      | 224     | 182  | 19 | "        | "       | "    | "  |

By the above Tables, shortest passages from India to England, & time of setting out.

|             |             |              |              |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
|             | By Bussorah | By Suez      | By Sea       |
| From Bombay | 99 days Jan | 129 March    | 168 November |
| From Madras | 218 " Nov   | 171 October  | 157 February |
| From Bengal | 134 " Feb   | 158 December | 147 January  |

Shortest Passages to India

|           |     |      |                         |           |
|-----------|-----|------|-------------------------|-----------|
| To Bombay | 118 | Sep. | 245 April, the only one | 119 March |
| To Madras | 117 | Feb. | 81 June                 | 112 April |
| To Bengal | 135 | Feb  | 115 April               | 176 April |

Intelligence of the Declaration of War March 18th from Mr. Baldwin, received.

At Bombay 86 Madras 99 Bengal 111

From the Committee of Secrecy dated April 17th, by Sea to Bengal 117

Mr. Dalrymple communicated to me a Table of some Passages from England to India of Ships leaving England from the middle of July to the end of September but does not mention to what part of India and is only of the time actually at Sea exclusive of the time the ships stopped for refreshment or Water.'

I. O. F. R. Egypt & the Red Sea. I.

Passages from India

| January<br>from  | Bombay   |         |      |    | Madras   |         |      |    | Bengal   |         |      |    |
|------------------|----------|---------|------|----|----------|---------|------|----|----------|---------|------|----|
|                  | Shortest | Longest | Mean | No | Shortest | Longest | Mean | No | Shortest | Longest | Mean | No |
| By Bussorah      | 99       | 149     | 116  | 4  | 294      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Suez          | 180      | "       | "    | 1  | 221      | "       | "    | 1  | 312      | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea           | 206      | "       | "    | 1  | 163      | "       | "    | 1  | 147      | 204     | 182  | 5  |
| <u>February</u>  |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah      | 109      | 272     | 180  | 7  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 134      | 335     | 234  | 2  |
| By Suez          | 152      | "       | "    | 1  | 270      | 286     | 278  | 2  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea           | 210      | "       | "    | 1  | 157      | 187     | 173  | 7  | 170      | 216     | 193  | 2  |
| <u>March</u>     |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah      | 126      | 232     | 189  | 4  | 286      | "       | "    | 1  | 188      | "       | "    | 1  |
| By Suez          | 129      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea           | "        | "       | "    | "  | 175      | 206     | 188  | 3  | 191      | 211     | 199  | 4  |
| <u>April</u>     |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah      | 118      | 206     | 143  | 4  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 184      | 264     | 224  | 2  |
| By Suez          | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea           | 190      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 177      | 242     | 203  | 3  |
| <u>May</u>       |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah      | 212      | 275     | 243  | 2  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 245      | "       | "    | "  |
| By Suez          | 178      | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea           | 184      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| <u>June</u>      |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah      | 146      | 238     | 176  | 4  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Suez          | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea           | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| <u>July</u>      |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah      | 174      | 281     | 221  | 5  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Suez          | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea           | "        | "       | "    | "  | 217      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| <u>August</u>    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah      | 239      | 254     | 246  | 2  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Suez          | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 292      | 445     | 347  | 3  |
| By Sea           | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 298      | "       | "    | 1  |
| <u>September</u> |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah      | 237      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Suez          | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 279      | "       | "    | 1  |
| By Sea           | 252      | "       | "    | 1  | 210      | "       | "    | 1  | 208      | "       | "    | 1  |



APPENDIX VI(C)  
Passages from India

(2)

| October<br>from | Bombay   |         |      |    | Madras   |         |      |    | Bengal   |         |      |    |
|-----------------|----------|---------|------|----|----------|---------|------|----|----------|---------|------|----|
|                 | Shortest | Longest | Mean | No | Shortest | Longest | Mean | No | Shortest | Longest | Mean | No |
| By Bussorah     | 162      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 180      | 199     | 187  | 3  |
| By Suez         | "        | "       | "    | "  | 171      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  |
| By Sea          | "        | "       | "    | "  | 167      | 280     | 213  | 4  | 148      | "       | "    | 1  |
| <u>November</u> |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah     | 140      | 170     | 157  | 6  | 218      | "       | "    | 1  | 151      | "       | "    | 1  |
| By Suez         | 148      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 188      | "       | "    | 1  |
| By Sea          | 168      | "       | "    | 1  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 164      | "       | "    | 1  |
| <u>December</u> |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |          |         |      |    |
| By Bussorah     | 106      | 314     | 148  | 8  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 189      | "       | "    | 1  |
|                 |          | 159     | 125  | 7  | "        | "       | "    | "  |          |         |      |    |
| By Suez         | "        | "       | "    | "  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 158      | 206     | 182  | 2  |
| By Sea          | 201      | 206     | 203  | 2  | "        | "       | "    | "  | 163      | 205     | 185  | 4  |

## APPENDIX VII

### George Baldwin after 1798.

On the eve of the British Expedition to Egypt to expel the French, he was asked by Lord Keith who was 'of opinion' that Baldwin's 'knowledge and experience will be most essential to us', to join the British army at Malta. He was usefully and effectively employed by the British Command during the Expedition until Abercromby's death. When he returned to England at the settlement of the Egyptian question, he was not of the opinion that it should come out of the struggle with clean hands. England did not expel the French for the 'beaux yeux' of the Grand Signor, but in defence of her interests, and was prepared to send the Sultan the annual tribute which the Beys were supposed to pay, but never did. His return to England, however, enabled him to the case of his dismissal from the consulate before the Treasury at the beginning of 1803. The case is a lengthy and complicated one. In April 1803, after the judgement of the Attorney General, Baldwin was paid £7,000 for salary and allowance covering the period in dispute. In 1813 he was paid £400 (date 5/1/1813) as the pension of post consul in Egypt. Even then he was not satisfied but the matter came to an end in April 1820 when the Assistant Secretary to the Treasury wrote him, 'I have it in command to acquaint you that my Lord cannot again open the consideration of the subject'. Baldwin died six years later.